

Can Aceh Learn from Scandinavia?

*An Upside Down Comparison of Popular
Representation*

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Table of Content

1	INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1	THE RESEARCH FOCUS.....	2
1.2	STRUCTURING THE THESIS	4
2	ANALYTICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK	7
2.1	CONCEPTUALIZING DEMOCRACY AND DEMOCRATIZATION	7
2.1.1	<i>The Pillars of Democracy</i>	7
2.1.2	<i>What is Democratic Representation?</i>	9
2.1.3	<i>Defining Democratization</i>	11
2.2	METHODOLOGICAL JUSTIFICATIONS	12
2.2.1	<i>The Logic of Upside Down Comparisons</i>	13
2.2.2	<i>The Process-tracing Method</i>	16
2.2.3	<i>Considerations About Validity and Reliability.....</i>	18
3	EMPIRICAL BACKGROUND.....	21
3.1	INDONESIAN DEMOCRACY.....	21
3.2	ACEH: HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS	22
3.2.1	<i>Mapping Spaces of Democracy in South Aceh.....</i>	28
4	PROBLEMS WITH DEMOCRATIC REPRESENTATION	33
4.1	EMPIRICAL FINDINGS FROM SOUTH ACEH	33
4.1.1	<i>Relationship Between the Demos and the Public Affairs</i>	34
4.1.2	<i>Intermediary Channels for Exercising Popular Control</i>	39
4.1.3	<i>Capacity of and Trust in Government Institutions</i>	44
4.2	LINKING THE FINDINGS TO DEMOCRATIC REPRESENTATION	48
5	DEMOCRATIC REPRESENTATION IN SCANDINAVIA	51
5.1	DOES A COMPARISON WITH SCANDINAVIA MAKE SENSE?	51
5.2	MAPPING THE SITUATION IN SCANDINAVIA	52
5.2.1	<i>Relationship Between the Demos and the Public Affairs</i>	52
5.2.2	<i>Intermediary Channels for Exercising Popular Control</i>	55
5.2.3	<i>Capacity of and Trust in Government Institutions</i>	56
5.2.4	<i>Recent Developments: Towards Fragmentation of Democracy?.....</i>	57
5.2.5	<i>Summing Up the Main Points</i>	58
6	TRACING THE DEVELOPMENT IN SCANDINAVIA	61
6.1	THE GENERAL SITUATION BEFORE THE DEMOCRATIZATION	61
6.1.1	<i>How did the Social Corporatist System Develop?</i>	62
6.1.2	<i>Explaining the Development of the Universal Welfare State</i>	65
6.1.3	<i>Explaining the Extensive Participation in Organizations.....</i>	67
6.1.4	<i>How come Scandinavians have so Much Trust in the State?.....</i>	69
6.1.5	<i>Development of the Impartial Public Sector</i>	69
6.1.6	<i>How could Decentralization be Combined with a Strong State?</i>	71
6.2	SUMMING UP THE MAIN POINTS.....	72

7	THEMATIC COMPARISON OF ACEH AND SCANDINAVIA.....	75
7.1	SOURCES OF INSPIRATION: THE PRIMACY OF POLITICS.....	76
7.1.1	<i>Recent Experiences from Other Contexts.....</i>	<i>77</i>
8	CONCLUDING REMARKS.....	79
	LITERATURE.....	83

1 Introduction

“Democratic institutions and elected governments...may or may not open spaces for democratic politics; they may or may not be responsive to the political demands of the poor, women and minorities; they may or may not facilitate the management of conflicts” (Bastian & Luckham, 2003: 2-3).

Democracy as a project in the Global South has faced a structural problem due to liberal democracy having been introduced ahead of the kind of industrialisation and modernisation that are generally assumed to have been necessary conditions for the rise of liberal constitutional states in Europe. In the European context the right to representation was contested as different interest groups mobilised and demanded political rights on the basis of an idea that they also should be active participants in the system of governance. In spite of different trajectories to democracy in these countries, a common denominator is that the logics of democracy was primarily driven from within (Webster, et al., 2009: 224).

After the second world war the idea of liberal democracy became hegemonic in the west and democratization was for the first time partially externally driven (Grugel, 2002: 42). With the idea that liberal democracy could be exported, a growing debate has since been going on about how this best can be done, and a number of studies have been carried out in attempts to identify what factors lead to the emergence of democracies. Recently in the global south the so-called third wave of democracy has been taking place in a context of globalization, where political authority have been increasingly diffused among the state, the market and civil society actors at local, national and global scales (Harriss, et al., 2004a: 2). These recent experiences with democratization in the global south do not fit into either the modernization theory of the relationship between economic development and democratization, or the structural theory of Barrington Moore (1966: 418) about the importance of a bourgeois for the emergence of democracy. Harriss, et al. (2004b) argues that the development of

democracy has been depoliticised. It has been proved possible to export liberal democracy by introducing free elections, while the consolidation and further development of these democracies has proved more problematic. Most efforts at democratization ahead of such transformations that took place in the established democracies through modern development that rooted classes, movements and parties, have unfortunately resulted in clientilism and elite-dominance (Törnquist, 2009d: 18). In Indonesia for example corruption is still widespread and there is problems with patronage and clientilism. Hence, many scholars are now questioning the actual meaning this kind of democracy has to regular citizens, and claims that it would be essential to deepen democracy through more citizen participation. Further, research on countries such as in this case Indonesia points out that some of these problems with the deepening of democracy seems to be related to a need to extend the democratic participation from below, and re-politicise democracy (Harriss, et al., 2004b; Törnquist, et al., 2009b). Recent experiences from for instance Brazil illustrates that it is in fact not impossible to improve popular representation (Törnquist, 2009d: 18), but there is a need for expanding contextual and comparative knowledge of the politics of fighting for and implementing substantial democratisation (Harriss, et al., 2004a: 25).

1.1 The Research Focus

“The aim is thus to take a number of crucial problems of democracy in such contexts (struggling democracies in the Global South) as a point of departure for reading into the Scandinavian experiences, and thus see if some lessons can be learnt” (Törnquist, 2010d).

In this thesis the focus will be on taking the case of popular representation in Indonesia, more specifically the South Aceh district in the tsunami affected and conflict-ridden province of Nangroe Aceh Darussalam, as a point of departure for

reading into the Scandinavian experiences on the same area. The study will be based on some specific theoretical assumptions about democratic participation and representation. These will draw on the framework and other contributions in the anthology 'Rethinking Popular Representation' (Törnquist, et al., 2009b) and Törnquist's (2010a) manuscript 'Analysing and Promoting the Dynamics of Democratisation'. A major pillar in this framework is that democratic representation is more than representation through elections. Recent research (e.g. in the anthology 'Aceh: the role of democracy for peace and reconstruction', by Törnquist, et al., 2010) indicates that democratic representation would be essential to develop in Aceh, and that there is a need for including people more from below and develop channels beyond the elections. A more specific ongoing local research project in the South Aceh district seeks to map what actually exists in this district of such forms of additional representation and channels for participation. Preliminary findings indicate there is a lack of people's participation and of such channels, and also that the lack of these channels and the participation are related to additional problems with fragmentation of governance and a lack of trust in the state.

The well-developed Scandinavian democracies, exemplified most prominently by Sweden and Norway¹, are known for their strong welfare states funded by high taxes, and extensive participation in 'civil society' organizations. These countries have well-established democratic institutions and some formal and informal chains of representation for people to turn to, but historically this has not always been the case. The question then is if some experiences with the solving of similar problems in Scandinavia can be useful sources for inspiration for improving conditions in a context such as Aceh. The important question is thus to ask why problems similar to those that will be identified in Indonesia were avoided or at least partially overcome in Scandinavia. But instead of taking the democracy in the west as a point of departure, the idea is to take the actually existing practices in context such as Aceh and see if one can thus discuss efforts at making them more democratic. Thus, the question this thesis

¹ The term Scandinavia includes Denmark as well as Norway and Sweden, but in this thesis the focus will only be on Norway and Sweden, thus excluding Denmark. This is partly due to time and resource constraints, but also that Norway and Sweden are the most characteristic examples of the Scandinavian welfare state or and could thus be the most crucial cases to investigate.

will aim to answer is *what, if any, Scandinavian historical experiences can be used as a source of inspiration in efforts to improve the condition of democratic representation in Aceh?*

1.2 Structuring the Thesis

In the proceeding chapters relevant theoretical and empirical arguments will be presented aiming at serving as a background for answering the above posited research question. The theoretical framework that the further discussion is based on, as well as considerations about the methodological approach is outlined in chapter two.

Chapter three then provides the empirical background for the analysis of Indonesia in general and Aceh in particular, also elaborating on the aims and methods of the ongoing local research project in South Aceh. A discussion of the more specific problems of popular representation in Indonesia in general, and more specifically in Aceh will be presented in chapter four, and here the discussion also will draw on the more recent findings from the research project in South Aceh.

Chapter five then provides a mapping of the general situation in Scandinavia linked to the problems with popular representation identified in the previous chapter, and there is a specific focus on identifying the decisive factors that should be object to further analysis. In chapter six, these decisive factors will be further investigated through a discussion where the important processes that led to the comparatively well functioning democratic chains of representation in Scandinavia are identified. That way it is also possible to identify who were the important actors, what kind of power relations were important and what were the main driving forces behind these changes in Scandinavia. Because one cannot recreate a range of necessary structural preconditions in such a context, it is of special interest to investigate the decisive factors that can be explained politically.

Then, in chapter seven a concise thematic comparison of Aceh and Scandinavia with regards to popular representation is carried out. Here the aim is to on the basis of the theoretical framework and empirical findings presented in the former chapters, answer if any Scandinavian historical experiences can be used as a source of inspiration in efforts to improve the condition of democratic representation in Aceh. In this chapter I will also draw on some more recent experiences with the promotion of popular representation in other contexts. The overall conclusions and findings from the thesis, as well as some thoughts on further possible steps are provided in the last chapter.

2 Analytical and Methodological Framework

2.1 Conceptualizing Democracy and Democratization

This thesis takes as a point of departure for the discussion Beethams (1999) definition of the aim of democracy as *popular control over public affairs on the basis of political equality*. This definition is distinctive in the sense that it emphasises the aim of democracy instead of identifying democracy with a specific set of institutional arrangements (Beetham, 1999: 3). By seeking to isolate the core principles embodied in the historical conception of democracy as ‘rule by the people’, Beetham identifies these core principles as being ‘popular control’ and ‘political equality’. He includes all civil and political rights in his definition, while arguing that social, cultural and economic rights are in mutual relationship with democracy. Törnquist’s (2009d) substantial democracy definition builds on Beetham (1999), but also includes *people’s capacity* to use democracy to further instrumental or democratic aims. This definition of right-based substantial democratization, thus stands in contrast to that of formal democratization in the sense that the rights do not only exist on paper but actually make sense to use for most people (Grugel, 2002: 5).

2.1.1 The Pillars of Democracy

A framework for the analysis of democracy based on Törnquists substantial definition is taken as a point of departure for the assessment of democracy, and here one can distinguish three basic pillars: The people, the public matters and the intermediary ways to exercise popular control of policymaking and implementation (Törnquist, 2009d: 10). The first pillar is concerned with the importance of having a clear definition of the people that should have popular control over public affairs. Globalization and its implications that the political authority have been increasingly diffused among the state, the market and civil society actors at local, national and

global scales has contributed to making it more difficult to distinguish the demos in relation to various issues spheres, and territories. It is thus important to have a clear definition of who has the right to control the different aspects of the public matters. Further it is important not only that all people are included in the demos, but that these also have the capacity to actually promote and use the democratic institutions (Törnquist, 2009d: 10).

The second pillar emphasises the importance of also having a clear definition of what is the public affairs that the people should have control over. It is problematic if certain issues, such as for instance gender-equality are left out of the public discourse. As Törnquist (2009d: 12) writes, although it may be clear that institutions such as the legislative and its executive, the civil and military administration, the judiciary and the police is a part of the public matters, the case is not so clear concerning for instance work environment. Another factor is to what extent institutions for private governance, such as private schools or health services, civil society organizations, and co-operatives are viewed as a part of the public matters that are supposed to be subject to popular control. The tendency of globalization is also important in this instance in the sense that more issues are being subject to control by market-mechanisms, international organizations such as the World Bank or civil society organizations that are not subject to any democratic control.

Thirdly, it is important to consider the intermediary ways for people to exercise popular control over public matters. Popular control over policymaking can be viewed as the input side of democracy, while the popular control over implementation refers to the output side of democracy. The question is thus how people have access to some control over the input- and output-side of public affairs, and whether this is based on political equality. There are formal arrangements for participation and representation related to different governance institutions such as through elected legislative assemblies and their executives on the local as well as central level. Further there are also institutions for consultation and participation through administrative boards and commissions, workers' participation in company management, participation in neighbourhood-associations and academic self-rule (Törnquist, 2009d: 13). Direct

participation and self-representation is of course a possible option for people, but in large-scale societies the aspect of representation is usually an important part of the intermediary ways for people to exercise popular control over public affairs. This representation via mediators or representatives can further be divided in three categories: Representation through civil society, representation through political society or representation through informal leaders. The representation through civil society includes self-management through for instance professional NGOs, associational life including a range from neighbourhood and sports-organizations to lobby and pressure groups and participation in the public discourse through media or academia. Further, the second type of representation through political society is often closely connected to that of civil society, and can take place through political parties, movements and organisations such as lobby or pressure groups based on an interest in governance of public affairs. The third kind of mediation refers to representation through informal leaders based on kinship, religion, ethnicity and sustained through patronage and good contacts (Törnquist, 2009d: 14).

2.1.2 What is Democratic Representation?

The means of mediation discussed above need not be democratic. Törnquist (2009d: 6) distinguishes three types of representation: That which is represented may be substantive, descriptive or symbolic. Substantive representation is when the representative acts for the represented, for instance, a leader advancing the interests of workers. Descriptive representation is when an actor stands for the represented by being objectively similar. For instance, a woman represents women and a resident in a village represents the other villagers. Symbolic representation is when an actor is perceived by the represented to once again stand for them but now, for instance, in terms of shared culture and identities.

For the representation to be democratic, the people being represented have to have some way of assuring that the representatives act according to their ideas and

interests. The essence of democratic representation is authorisation and accountability based on political equality, which presuppose transparency and responsiveness (Törnquist, 2009d: 6). Democratic representation itself requires at least the establishment of two preconditions: appropriate institutions and citizen control over elected representatives (Chandhoke, 2009: 26). For this to work the representatives have to be authorized via a mandate, and be accountable to the public through some sort of democratic and transparent mechanism. If the representation through mediators does not take place in a democratic way, or people do not have equal access to these different modes of representation, the aim of democracy as popular control over public affairs based on political equality is not achieved.

There are two major approaches to democratic representation. The first approach focuses on the chain of popular sovereignty from the people, via various intermediaries such as democratic organisations expressing collective interests and ideas, to elected political parties and politicians, supposedly aggregating these views, taking decisions, making laws, and delegating the executive powers and overseeing impartial administrative and legal implementation. The second approach stresses the importance of direct participation of the immediately concerned people through not only formal but also informal arrangements, popular movements and lobby groups as well as civil action in, for instance, neighbourhoods and associations for self-management (Törnquist, 2009d: 6). Törnquist then presents an alternative framework:

“Given the primacy of democratic and not just any form of popular representation, the point of departure must be the chain of popular sovereignty. However, it should be applied not only to the established polity, but also to efforts at representation beyond the formal public institutions” (Törnquist, 2009d: 9).

The major challenge is thus to apply the chain-of-popular-sovereignty approach also within the fragmented landscape of actual governance and popular engagement. The focus should be on the strategic connections: Firstly the conceptualisation of

representation and the authority and legitimacy of substantive, descriptive and symbolic representation, secondly the links between political representation and governance and thirdly, the construction, organisation and dynamics of direct and mediated representation (Törnquist, 2009d: 15). Advanced democratic representation is not only dependent on the introduction of liberties, parties and elections; it also calls for regulation of business, popular political capacity and institutionalized democratic channels for citizens and interest based organizations (Törnquist, 2010a: 22).

2.1.3 Defining Democratization

The framework above implies that elections are only a necessary component of democracy and not a sufficient. Even if elections are held, these can still exclude a large part of the population from contesting power, and only focusing on elections does not take into account if these elections are meaningful to the public. Especially in the early stages of a democratic transition the policy alternatives offered by political parties can vary widely (Bünthe & Ufen, 2009: 5).

The process of democratization is made up of real struggles to establish a mode of decision making about collectively binding rules and policies over which the people exercise control (Beetham, 1992, cited in Grugel, 2002: 3). Grugel (2002: 64) emphasizes the need to explain democratization holistically. Structures are of vital importance for explaining outcomes, but democratization is a dynamic process that is to a large extent also shaped by actors' choices and political decisions. No individual precondition or cause operates in a vacuum, and the options available for the actors or politicians are shaped by the structures in society. The structures can be for instance the patterns of interaction between state and society, organizational traditions and state capacity (Grugel, 2002: 65). What politics and actors choices can actually do is to act within these structures, and try to change them in ways that contributes to the promotion of democratic development or facilitate processes that can increase popular participation and contribute to substantial democratization.

Substantial democracy also requires state capacity to respond to pressures from citizens, and carry out policies and commitments to them as well (Grugel, 2002: 82). Democracy is dependent on ‘strong regulative and coordinating programmes mandated through state institutions, strongly linked to participatory and critical civic organizations’ (Iris Marion Young, 1999: 161, cited in Grugel, 2002: 31). Countries such as Indonesia are trying to build democracies in a time of global capitalism where the state is being forced to cut back and re-shape its role as a provider of public goods, as the arbiter of national economic policy-making and as the source of welfare provision (Grugel, 2002: 88).

“...although international agencies support democratic institutions...in practice [they] undermine the democratic process by imposing policies. Officially of course, the IMF doesn’t ‘impose’ anything. It negotiates the conditions for receiving aid. But all the power in the negotiations is on one side” (Stiglitz, 2000, cited in Grugel, 2002: 90).

The definition of democracy as popular control over public affairs on the basis of political equality thus presupposes that in a shift from some sort of authoritarian rule towards democracy there needs to be a change in the power structures from a few towards the people.

2.2 Methodological Justifications

Is it even possible to compare two so different cases as Aceh in Indonesia and Scandinavia? The cases of Aceh and Scandinavia do obviously not fall into the category of most similar systems where all variables except from the outcome and the explanatory variable is the same. The two cases are indeed different in a range of aspects, but they neither fit into a most different system design because of the fact that in this case even the outcome is not similar (Landman, 2003: 73). The comparison is

thus based on two extremely different cases with different outcome, and the justification and approach for comparing them will be what can be called an upside down comparison (Törnquist, 2010e), for which the logics will be elaborated on below.

This thesis is a qualitative thematic comparison of Aceh and historically in Scandinavia, concerning popular political organisation and representation through additional forms of democracy. The main approach and research design will be an upside down comparison, while the main methodological approach will be process tracing as a method for identifying the processes and specific turning points in history that led to comparatively well functioning democratic chains of representation in Scandinavia. That way it should be possible to identify who were the important actors, what kind of power relations were important and what were the main driving forces behind these changes in Scandinavia. If one can find examples of processes where political decisions were behind (as opposed to structural conditions only), this can be useful for the context of Aceh. This is thus neither a view that one single variable can explain the outcome of democracy (but rather processes of intertwined factors), and neither a view that structural factors explain everything, but that political decisions matter.

2.2.1 The Logic of Upside Down Comparisons²

A range of comparisons has been put forward between established democracies (e.g., Lijphart, 1999). These comparisons have focused on the differences in the development of established democracies, their functioning and their institutional designs. Further, a multitude of comparative analyses have been performed between democratic and non-democratic countries in order to identify essential variables that help explain transitions to democracy (e.g., Huntington, 1991; Linz & Stepan, 1996).

² The idea of ‘upside down comparison’ is taken from Törnquist’s (2010e) paper presented at the Oslo University Democracy program’s international workshop. 18-20 October 2010.

Usually these studies have taken democracy in the established western democracies as standards for which new democracies are measured against. When only comparing with somewhat similar trajectories or outcomes, important aspects can be overlooked or taken for granted. As Törnquist (2010e: 2) argues a number of fundamentals of democracy are excluded from the list of ideal liberal democratic institutions, presumably because they are taken for granted in the Global North. Thus, by taking the problems with democracy in a newly established struggling democracy in the global south as a point of departure for studying Scandinavian democracy new insights might be found. Not only how does democracy emerge, as in the institutional existence of elections etc., but also how did the participation that seems to be missing in countries such as Indonesia emerge? This approach thus differs from the conventional modernisation school that has framed comparison so far, with its use of Anglo-American history as a basis for comparison (Törnquist, 2010e: 5). Also because the identification of for example insufficient rule of law or governance does not say anything about why and how, and what could be done, Törnquist (2010e: 2) argues that there is a need to add more contextual analysis of relations of power and the actors' will and capacity to use and promote or counter and abuse democracy.

The main object of analysis in this thesis will thus be Scandinavian historical experiences with the development of democratic representation, but by first looking at the problems in Aceh this gives a useful perspective for the analysis and helps deciding which problems to focus on. The idea is further that once a problem has been identified in the first context, Aceh in this case, and an interesting solution to a similar problem has been located in the second context which is Scandinavia, the next step is to trace the political process through which this more positive outcome came about (Törnquist, 2010e: 2-3). Structural factors may be very different, but the politics of priorities, alliances and coalitions may be less difficult to adapt, and crucial advances in Scandinavia and Brazil and Kerala can be explained by a primacy of politics (Törnquist, 2010e: 3). The point is thus to see if some of the processes etc identified in the 'positive' case can help to identify factors in the second case that may foster

similar tendencies or contain those who oppose them (Törnquist, 2010e: 3). Secondly, the ‘upside-down’ comparison is interesting in the sense that it may help generating new perspectives on what has happened in the Scandinavian or the ‘positive’ case, typically because what has not been a major problem has not been addressed by scholars (Törnquist, 2010e: 3).

The logic of this type of comparison thus differs from that of traditional comparative analysis where the ideal is experimental research designs and the methodological logic of comparisons is seen as analogous to the mode of hypothesis-testing through multivariate analysis (Skocpol & Somers, 1980: 175). Instead, the logic is more similar to that of comparative history as the contrast of contexts, for which the rationale behind is best exemplified by a quote from the work of Reinhard Bendix:

“By means of comparative analysis I want to preserve a sense of historical particularity as far as I can, while still comparing different countries. Rather than aim at broader generalizations and lose that sense, I ask the same or at least similar questions of divergent materials and so leave room for divergent answers” (1976, cited in Skocpol & Somers, 1980: 180).

The idea is thus that one can increase the ‘visibility’ of one structure by contrasting it to another (Bendix, 1977, cited in Skocpol & Somers, 1980: 180). By using this approach one may thus be able to increase the ‘visibility’ of the development of Scandinavian democracy by contrasting it with the experiences and problems identified in Aceh. By making this comparison with the problems identified in Aceh as a point of departure for looking at the historical development of democracy in Scandinavia, one can make visible processes or structures that may have earlier been overlooked or taken for granted when comparing with more similar contexts.

2.2.2 The Process-tracing Method

“The process-tracing method attempts to identify the intervening causal process – the causal chain and causal mechanism – between an independent variable (or variables) and the outcome of the dependent variable” (George & Bennett, 2005).

Process-tracing as a method in political science has achieved increased recognition in the last few decades, and scholars such as Charles Tilly (cited in George & Bennett, 2005: 205) has argued that theoretical propositions should be based on relevant, verifiable causal stories resting in differing chains of cause-effect relations whose efficacy can be demonstrated independently of those stories. In comparative politics statistical analysis with a large number of observations has been dominant and the effects of extraneous variables is usually controlled by selecting and comparing cases in which there is no co-variation between the control variable and the dependent variable (Freundreis, 1983: 257). This has primarily been achieved through the employment of a proper research design such as a most similar system design or a most different system design (Freundreis, 1983: 260-261). The focus has to a large extent been on identifying necessary and sufficient variables, and usually the focus has been on single variables in explaining outcomes. Still, there have also been developed methods for identifying the interaction between different variables also through for instance Ragins (2000) method of studying cases as configurations.

A problem with such analysis is the focus on co-variation and a lack of identification of the causal mechanisms, a problem that can be illustrated by the image of fifty dominoes in a straight line where only number one and number fifty are visible. When the two of them are suddenly lying down one can assume that all of the others also are lying down because of the co-variation, but to actually identify the causal links one have to look into every single domino. This is where the process-tracing method comes in handy (George & Bennett, 2005: 206). Process tracing can be used as a tool for testing theories by investigating if the posited or implied causal

mechanisms actually occur, or as in this case as a tool for developing theory (George & Bennett, 2005: 208-209). The use of process tracing in this case will take the form of an analytical explanation (George & Bennett, 2005: 211), where the focus is on of how certain aspects of democratic representation came about in Scandinavia. The explanation will be analytical in the sense that a certain theoretical framework is taken as a point of departure for deciding which aspects are important, in this case specific turning points that are subject to political decisions and important in the development of democratic representation. There is also a need to distinguish between different types of causal processes (George & Bennett, 2005: 212), and in this case the causal process is assumed to take the form of interacting causal variables that are in general not independent of each other.

A recent example of the method can be found in the first chapter of the anthology on Aceh by Törnquist, et al., (2009a). Here Törnquist uses a process-tracing approach for analysing what made the peace in Aceh possible. He focuses on identifying the different processes and turning points which not by them selves made the peace process possible, but were important factors that when applied together can explain how the peace process became possible.

“To answer the question why – and what kind of – democracy was possible it is necessary therefore to search for additional, more decisive factors that influenced the turning points in the negotiations where democratic peace became a viable alternative for the major actors. Equally useful is the identification of the dynamics that differ from the experiences in the less successful cases of Sri Lanka and other disturbed areas in Indonesia” (Törnquist, 2009c: 17).

Process tracing thus explains outcomes not just by identifying which variables are present or not in different cases, and then make an assumption about causality, but tries to identify the chains of events that led to a specific outcome. As exemplified in the quotation above, this process tracing approach can also be useful for comparisons across cases.

2.2.3 Considerations About Validity and Reliability

The research design and method that are applied in this thesis contributes to assuring the validity of the study. The advantage with studying few cases is that the thorough analysis of each case increases the possibilities for identifying causal relationships, and this is further secured through the process tracing approach where the aim is to identify the specific causal mechanisms. Further, the definition of democracy as referring to the aim of democracy instead of being based on a range of necessary institutions, contributes to securing that the observations meaningfully capture ideas contained in the concept in the different contexts of Aceh and Scandinavia (Adcock, 2001: 529).

In this study the aim is firstly to investigate if any of the historical experiences in Scandinavia can have any relevance in the specific context of Aceh, so the aim is not primarily that of drawing inferences that can be valid outside of the specific cases investigated in this study. Still, due to the focus on processes, and then specifically those that have been subject to political decisions, the findings can also be relevant for other contexts, but then of course there is a need for more contextual analysis of the specific cases. This case will thus primarily say something about the specific case of Aceh and Scandinavia.

Regarding the reliability of the findings the research do have some limitations. The findings from the research in South Aceh, which many of the arguments in this thesis draw on, are based on preliminary presentations of not yet finished research. Also I do not have extensive information about the methods that are used in the research on South Aceh, and thus the validity of the findings are difficult to assess at this point of time. Also, some of the arguments I use in the analysis are based on discussions during the field visit in Aceh, and for the securing of the validity of the conclusions, more thorough research should be performed. Still, the field visit in Aceh,

and the discussions with the research team have reduced the risk of wrong interpretation of the findings, and thus strengthened the overall validity of the study.

Regarding the analysis on historical processes in Scandinavia this should be subject to more extensive research without the time and space limitations of a master thesis. It should also be carried out in cooperation with scholars that have extensive knowledge on the specific history of Scandinavia.

Due to the upside down approach applied in this thesis, thorough analysis and understanding of the problems in Aceh was necessary for focusing the more specific analysis on Scandinavia. Due to the fact that I did not have any extensive prior knowledge to the situation in Aceh, a large amount of time was put into actually understanding the dynamics. Further the specification of the problems in Aceh was of course the responsibility of the research team, but because the research is not yet finished, the material used in this thesis is primarily based on presentations on preliminary findings and discussion with the researchers during a field visit in Aceh in late September/early October 2010. Thus, the specific problems that serves as a point of departure for the historical analysis of Scandinavian experiences was not specified until the beginning of October 2010.

3 Empirical background

3.1 Indonesian Democracy

After the dismantling of authoritarian president Soeharto and the New Order regime in 1998, the first free parliamentary elections took place in June 1999. Indonesia had thus become an electoral democracy. Bacharuddin Jusuf Habibie, the former vice-president who succeeded Soeharto after his resignation, had implemented a range of political reforms including the releasing of political prisoners, decentralization of political power and freedom of political parties and press (Bünthe & Ufen, 2009: 3-4). The elections in 1999 resulted in the presidency of Abdurrahman Wahid, but already in 2001 he was impeached due to a corruption scandal, and replaced by his vice-president Megawati Soekarnoputri. In 2004, the second legislative elections were also followed by the first direct presidential election in Indonesia's history. The result of the elections was that the former New Order General Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono won and became president (Hadiz, 2010: 67-68).

According to Freedom House's most recent annual report on freedom in the world Indonesia obtains the score 2 on political rights, which implies that the country is assessed to be free (FreedomHouse, 2010). Still, recent research on Indonesia indicates that there are deeply entrenched problems with the state of democracy. Scholars such as Bünthe and Ufen (Bünthe & Ufen, 2009: 4) claims that the spread of democracy has by no means eradicated all forms of political repression as the military still exercises a huge influence, the political elite often uses power for their own ends and, and that corruption is endemic. Further, the decentralization process that was initiated after the fall off the New Order have according to Nordholt (2004: 30) was not synonymous with a shift from authoritarian to democratic rule, and neither implied a shift from a strong state towards a strong civil society. His argument is further that Indonesian politics is in fact marked by strong continuities of patrimonial patterns and a deeply entrenched nature of regional elites (Nordholt, 2004: 47). The findings from

the Demos³ survey - an all-Indonesian survey on the state of democracy, indicate that in spite of freedoms, elections and liberal institutions there are problems with the operational capacity and governance, as well as with the popular representation and actors capacity to use and promote democracy (Törnquist, 2010a: 46).

3.2 Aceh: Historical Context and Recent Developments

Nangroe Aceh Darussalam is the uppermost province on the Indonesian island Sumatra. Even though Indonesia on paper became an electoral democracy in 1999, in the Aceh province, the collapse of the Soeharto regime did not lead to democracy, but opened the way to the re-invigoration of separatist movements (Crouch, 2010: 4). Even though Indonesia on paper became an electoral democracy with the parliamentary elections in 1999, it was not until after the Helsinki peace agreement in 2005 that the first free and fair direct elections were held in Aceh.

Due to its location on the northern tip of Sumatra, in the sea-lanes between Turkey, the Middle East, India and the Far East, Aceh has historically been an important trading empire (Prasetyo & Birks, 2010: 47). The inclusion of Aceh and Sumatra in an Indonesian state was a decision made by the British and the Dutch with the London treaty of 1824 (Reid, 2006b: 52), and a common view after the dismantling of the New Order regime was that Indonesia was a colonial elite construct that would eventually fall apart. Rebellion and resistance to outside interference in their affairs have thus historically been a part of the Acehnese way of life (Prasetyo & Birks, 2010: 47). The invasion of Aceh by the Dutch in 1873 was the beginning of 130 years marked by military occupation and repression. After the independence of the Indonesian state from the Dutch in 1949, the resistance was directed against the central government in Jakarta, manifested through the Free Aceh Movement (GAM – *Gerakan Aceh Merdeka*) fight for independence (Prasetyo & Birks, 2010: 48-54).

³ The surveys were designed and co-directed by Olle Törnquist, and carried out with the Indonesian research NGO Demos (The Indonesian Centre for Democracy and Research Studies).

The Dutch colonial government facilitated their administration through *ulèëbalang* on the local level. The *ulèëbalang* was a traditional Acehnese institution of local leaders, which under the Dutch colonial period was transformed into something similar to a feudal ruler (Reid, 2006a: 102). The Indonesian state became independent from the Dutch in 1949, and in 1959 the Acehnese regional government was granted jurisdiction over education, customary law and religion. After Soeharto instituted his authoritarian New Order regime in 1965, Aceh again lost its right to manage political and economic development in 1966. The Soeharto regime was characterized by a highly centralised and militarised system, with military commands allocated at each administrative level (Prasetyo & Birks, 2010: 53-54).

In spite of some people characterizing Indonesia after the fall of Soeharto as a near-failed state, the central government authority has in fact been quite strong and the problem has not been that the state was lacking authority. Rather the problem has been that segments of the state were ‘captured’ by vested interests (Crouch, 2010: 5). Both during the Dutch colonial period and during Soehartos’ New Order regime there was thus a strong presence of the central government in Aceh. That means that the local administration was developed prior to the democratisation of Indonesia. Hence, the local administration has historically been an instrument for control by the central government, instead of also being responsive from below. The authoritarianism of the New Order regime accompanied with exploitation of Aceh’s natural resources contributed to further rebellion that manifested itself through the Free Aceh Movement’s proclamation of independence for Aceh in 1976. In 1990 the Indonesian government designated Aceh a military Operation Zone (DOM) (Prasetyo & Birks, 2010-55).

The *reformasi* period that succeeded the resignation of Soeharto and the dismantling of the New Order regime was marked by extensive decentralisation and a number of political reforms. In Aceh, the fall of Soeharto led to a call for the withdrawal of DOM, which resulted in the lifting of DOM in August 1998 (Prasetyo & Birks, 2010: 57). This in turn provoked an increase of the violence and repression, and after some time the idea of a referendum was born among students in Aceh. There

were attempts at peace negotiations under the new president Wahid, facilitated by the Henry Dunant Centre, which led to a humanitarian pause in 2000 and a ceasefire agreement in 2002, but under the new administration of president Sukarnoputri in 2003 violence intensified again in Aceh (Prasetyo & Birks, 2010-66).

It was first on 15 August 2005, less than a year after the devastating December 2004 tsunami killed more than four percent of the Aceh population, that a peace agreement was signed between Government of Indonesia and the Free Aceh Movement (GAM). The Helsinki MoU (Memorandum of Understanding) further provided the mandate for a drafting of a new legislation on the governance of Aceh, and in 2006 the Law on the Governing of Aceh (LoGA) was officially passed.

Even though the tsunami was an important factor in the peace process, a comparative analysis of the case of Aceh and also tsunami-affected Sri Lanka points out that the influence of the tsunami was related to already existing processes in Aceh rather than independent of these (Törnquist, 2010f: 5). In particular, two democratic preconditions and three democratic turning points stand out in explaining what made the peace possible in Aceh. Firstly there was a political and territorial-based rather than ethnic or religious identity in public matters, so the public engagement was thus based primarily on political interest and participation rather than ethnicity and religion. The second democratic precondition was the undermining of the separatist strategy because Indonesia did not disintegrate but decentralized and democratised from 1998 and onwards, which in turn paved the way for political solutions. The democratic turning points identified are firstly the contained dynamics of authoritarianism and unregulated business, secondly the then fertile ground for Ahtisaari's focus on political conflict transformation; and the broader space that was thus generated for politically innovative, resourceful and democracy-oriented Acehnese nationalists (Törnquist, 2009c: 30). A major conclusion from the research on why the peace agreement in Aceh became possible, is that contrary to recent arguments about the need to sequence democracy for avoiding conflict - in Aceh the extensive democracy actually played an important role for making the peace possible. The conflict was in fact not resolved or

managed but to a large extent transformed into a democratic framework based on the equal rights to participate for all parties involved (Törnquist, 2009c: 31).

In December 2006, three decades after GAM leader Hasan Muhammed de Tiro declared the “independence of Aceh Sumatra”, the holding of governor and district elections took place throughout⁴ the Aceh province, and the prospects for the sustaining of peace and the development of democracy was optimistic. As the first province in Indonesia, Aceh also allowed independent candidates being elected (The ISAI Aceh Research Group, 2010: 258). The gubernatorial elections resulted in the victory of Yusuf Irwandi and Muhammed Nazar who were associated with GAM/KPA⁵ and SIRA⁶. Also the district and municipal candidates from KPA and SIRA obtained a significant amount of votes, and won in seven of the twenty-one districts and municipalities in Aceh. Both in the gubernatorial elections and in the district and municipal elections the tendency was that candidates from the national political parties such as The Golkar Party⁷ received little support (The ISAI Aceh Research Group, 2010: 265-257)

The 2009 national election in Aceh was the final formal step that was prescribed in the Helsinki agreement⁸ (Uning, et al., 2010: 398). An important question before the elections was whether the democratic framework developed in the peace talks could be further developed so that it could sustain peace and reconstruction. The results from these elections pointed towards a more insecure future for the multi-party environment envisioned in the peace agreement, and the

⁴ In two districts, Bireuen and South Aceh, the elections were first held in 2007 and early 2008 (The ISAI Aceh Research Group, 2010: 259).

⁵ The Aceh Transitional Committee (*Komite Peralihan Aceh*) was a new non-military organisation based on GAMs military structure and hierarchy, the Nanggroe Aceh Army (*Teuntra Nanggroe Aceh*), which was established as a part of the political transition of GAM after the peace agreement in 2005. As a consequence of the KPA being based on the GAM military structure, it had strong presence on all local levels, something that was important for the mobilisation of voters. In addition to the establishment of the KPA, it was established a local party in order to compete in the 2009 general elections (The ISAI Aceh Research Group, 2010: 277).

⁶ SIRA originally stands for the Center for Information on Referendum in Aceh, which was an umbrella organisation for NGOs and other civil society organisations in favour of a referendum on independence for Aceh. The SIRA party stands for the Acehnese People's Independent Voice (*Suara Independen Rakyat Aceh*), which grew out and took its name from a mass based organisation that grew out of the original SIRA umbrella organisation (Hamzah, 2010: 317-318).

⁷ *Partai Golongan Karya* (Functional Group Party)

⁸ Not all of the formal steps prescribed in the peace agreement have yet been implemented though.

optimism after the 2006 elections seemed to have faded somewhat. The elections appeared in general to be a combination of poor administration, political drama and vote manipulation, and these problems were indeed also present in Aceh (Uning, et al., 2010: 381). The results of the elections was that the Aceh Party won an overwhelming victory and gained 33 seats in the provincial parliament (DPRA), and was able to dominate 17 of 23 districts and municipalities⁹. The other local parties came far behind, both in the provincial parliament and in the various district parliaments, while the national political parties in comparison did quite well (Uning, et al., 2010: 376-379).

In explaining the victory of the Aceh Party, Uning (2010: 384-386) emphasises the rhetoric from the party leaders before the elections that they were the true representatives of Acehnese nationalism that would recognize the customary values, and also that they had suffered together with the people during the conflict. The SIRA party were characterized by leaders of the Aceh Party as being more like the child of the real parents in the Aceh Party, and thus nothing that should be taken too seriously (Uning, et al., 2010: 391-393). This rhetoric promoted a view among people that the Aceh Party in fact was the only party that had been mandated by the Helsinki MoU, and the party was also successful in securing the votes from traditional GAM supporters. Another assessment of why the Aceh Party did so well was that the people of Aceh preferred their own candidates instead of outsiders because 'rather than being eaten by other people, it is better to be eaten by our own brother'. Yet another factor for why the Aceh Party was so successful was the existence of well functioning offices all around Aceh due to the fact that the party was founded in the KPA whose organisational structure in turn was based on the military structure of GAM. In that sense the party had an advantage in the sense of an extensive local presence compared to the other local parties. Further explanations for the results is a combination of that the voters were not very critical, and that the other local parties such as SIRA - the

⁹ At this time the Aceh Province consisted of four municipalities and 17 districts. In 2007 two more districts were officially established: District of Pidie Jaya, and City of Subulussalam. In the 2009 elections the number of districts and municipalities was thus raised from 21 to 23.

presumed main contender to the Aceh Party, were not very good prepared (Uning, et al., 2010: 391-395).

Another issue regarding the 2009 elections was that the Aceh Party had linked up with the national Democratic Party of President Yudhoyono, something which can be claimed to be part of a strategy for attempting to secure its leadership in Aceh with support from the central level with the Democratic Party as something similar to a patron. The situation thus reminded more of the power sharing initially proposed by the Indonesian government¹⁰ instead of the multi-party environment envisioned in the Helsinki MoU (Törnquist, 2009c: 25).

A vital problematic part of the Aceh Party gaining so much support is that this was obtained through a combination of populism and clientilism where they gained support from its loyalists by promising patronage, and also convinced people that they actually would sustain clientilism within the public administration. As Uning (2010: 391) further puts is, the Aceh Party pooled a number of vested interests without changing the system.

This means that although the formal elections are in place in Aceh, the spaces for more people's participation have indeed not been opened up, and the power does not appear to have shifted in the advantage of the people. A major concern is thus whether the elections actually channelled the participation of the actors and interest necessary for the deepening of democracy (Uning, et al., 2010: 375).

Still, many Acehnese view the victory of the Aceh Party as something very positive for Aceh because as one informant put it 'this is the victory of the people, and it will be a huge icon of change for the Aceh government in the future' (Uning, et al., 2010: 398). Yet, there are some worries that the Aceh Party will remain unchallenged, and the results from this election only underline the importance of further development of the democratic framework in regards to supplementary forms of involvement of

¹⁰ The initial approach by President Yudhoyono and Vice-President Kalla were characterized by a strategy of secret elite-talks, power-sharing and favourable business deals for the conflicting parties in return for peace. This was in line with the notion that democracy should be sequenced (c.f. Mansfield & Snyder, 2007), and had been applied in Central Sulawesi and the Moluccas (Törnquist, 2010c: 16).

people in politics. The general conclusion after the 2009 election is that this calls for efforts to extend democracy beyond parties and elections only, and strengthen the basis for popular representation through organisations that have a basis in the people and are developed from below. Democratisation as a pathway to peace, reconstruction and development in Aceh was thus proved possible, but even though formal electoral democracy has been relatively successfully introduced in Aceh, there is a need to further develop the democratic framework beyond liberal democracy (Uning, et al., 2010-412).

3.2.1 Mapping Spaces of Democracy in South Aceh

The project ‘Mapping Spaces of Democracy in South Aceh’ is a local research project coordinated by Leena Avonius and the Aceh Institute, supported by the International Centre for Aceh and Indian Ocean Studies (ICAIOS), the Swedish International Agency for Local Democracy (ICLD), and academically supervised by Olle Törnquist. The project has grown out of the recent research on Aceh which points to the need to further develop democracy, and the aim of the project has been to map fundamental aspects of local democracy in post-conflict Aceh. The approach here has been to map the general situation in Aceh concerning governance and participation in the areas of physical planning, production development, social security, education and access to justice. More specifically the research has been focusing on asking where, and also in what way, ordinary people and local actors turn in attempts to influence decision-making and/or gain representation for their interests. Hence, the research attempts to map the spaces for representation and participation that do exist, beyond the formal holding of elections. Because of time and recourse constraints making it impossible to investigate the entire Aceh province the research has been focusing on one specific district, the South Aceh district (*Aceh Selatan*). The reasons for the selection of this specific district will be elaborated on below. A second step of the project, where this thesis possibly could serve as a contribution, is to explore if any Scandinavian experiences could be used to widen the spaces of local democracy in the

South Aceh district. A possible third step is an exchange between the South Aceh district and a local authority in Sweden as a part of the ICLD (International Centre for Local Democracy) exchange programme, where the focus will be on implementing the major recommendations from the research-team.

The South Aceh district that was chosen for the research is located on the southwest coast of the Aceh Province. The population of 193,545 people is spread across sixteen sub-districts and 247 villages. The district capital is the city Tapaktuan, which is located approximately twelve hours with car - along the tsunami-affected coastline, from the provincial capital Banda Aceh. Three characteristics make the district somewhat distinctive, and made it an appropriate candidate for the research. Firstly, the South Aceh district was affected by the 2004 earthquake and tsunami, but the damages were much less severe than in more northern districts on Aceh's west coast. The reconstruction was thus not as dominating in this district as in more northern coastal districts, and the influx of foreign aid workers and NGOs had not dominated the district to the same extent. Much damage has though been caused in the district as a result of the enduring civil conflict, and the district is categorized to be one of the worst affected conflict areas (Avonius, 2010a). Secondly, even though the Aceh Party became the largest political party in the 2009 elections, other parties gained seats as well in the district parliament (DPRK) to a much larger extent than in the other Aceh districts, thus providing the South Aceh district with a more pluralistic multi-party environment similar to that envisioned in the Helsinki peace agreement. Thirdly, with its somewhat peripheral location, twelve hours from the district capital, the South Aceh district was also an attractive research object because it may not be as influenced by the politics in Banda Aceh as districts closer to the provincial centre.

Senior researchers from the Aceh institute and ICAIOS (International Centre for Aceh and Indian Ocean Studies) have since early May 2010, together with their research assistants and in cooperation with the local authorities, been responsible for carrying out the research. The researchers have concluded their fieldwork and their final reports will be submitted in December 2010. The empirical findings from the research that are used in this thesis are based on presentations by the researchers and

the following discussions during a field visit in Aceh from 28. September to 7 October 2010. Preliminary findings from the project were presented by the researchers, and accompanied by a follow-up discussion in a seminar in the South Aceh district capital Tapaktuan on October 1. 2010. At the seminar informants and important local actors were present, including the district regent (*bupati*) Husin Yusuf, S.Pd and his vice-regent Daska Aziz, M.Pd, heads of local administration, representatives from business and civil society organizations as well as customary (*adat*) leaders. Further discussions took place in the ICAIOS office in Banda Aceh with the research-team, the ICAIOS team-leader Leena Avonius, the head of the Aceh Institute Lukman Age and the project advisor Olle Törnquist, who also represented the ICLD (International Centre for Local Democracy). The four local researchers who have been responsible for the research is Fadhli Ali on the area of production development, Saiful Mahdi on the area of physical planning, Zubaidah Djohar on the area of access to justice and Teuku Kemal Faysa on the area of education and social security.

In the area of production development the focus in particular was to map what kind of citizen associations or stakeholder groups for production and economy that do exist in South Aceh, how these function and if there exist any mechanisms or forums for these to be included in decision-making. Further the focus was also to investigate the role and functioning of informal institutions such as the traditional *adat* institutions, and their relation to local government. Regarding physical planning, the focus was mainly on mapping practises of participatory planning in South Aceh, such as the *Musrenbang*, and look into the different models offered by various agencies such as the state, international organizations and NGOs. The research on access to justice was to focus on legal practices in South Aceh, and the relation to the actual legal framework consisting of state justice system, Islamic law and *adat* or customary law. The focus on the area of education was on people's access to information on public expenditures and possibilities for affecting allocations. Further the research was to look into what formal and informal educational institutions that exist and the district governments policy. Finally, the research on social security was to generally map how social security is organised in South Aceh, and investigate closer the role of various

post-tsunami and post-conflict aid programs and their relation to government policies (Mahdi & Avonius, 2010).

In the following chapter some of the preliminary findings from this research will be applied in the discussion concerning the identification of problems with democratic representation in Indonesia in general and Aceh in particular. The identification of these problems will in turn serve as a point of departure for a thematic comparison of Aceh and Scandinavia.

4 Problems with Democratic Representation

4.1 Empirical findings from South Aceh

As the results from the 2009 elections discussed earlier illustrates, a general tendency in Aceh is the insufficiency of democratic representation beyond the formal holding of elections. Political freedoms exist indeed, but the political representation is constrained, and it is a paradox that while liberal democracy and the unique freedom to register independent political candidates and build local political parties have been remarkably successful in Aceh, these have yet to impact on poor popular representation (Törnquist, 2009a: 8-10).

As mentioned earlier, the research-team's focus was on mapping the general situation in South Aceh concerning what opportunities for participation there are for various stakeholders in decision-making on the areas of physical planning, production development, social security, education and access to justice. Further they attempted to map generally where, and also in what way, ordinary people and vital actors and organisations turn when they have a problem not deemed to be personal within the scope of these areas (Mahdi & Avonius, 2010; Törnquist, 2010e: 11). Initial findings on the research showed that because previous research on the South Aceh district is lacking, a general mapping of peoples access to services and the functioning of government seemed to be necessary to conduct before analysing and mapping the actual spaces for popular participation (Avonius, 2010c). The preliminary presentations by the research-team on the South Aceh district and the following discussions led to a general diagnosis of the district that includes three key problems. First of all, despite the district having a good potential there is a problem of stagnation in the economic sector. Secondly, while democratic mechanisms are formally in place, the governance is poor and citizens have little trust towards the state. Thirdly, there seems to be a general lack of leadership and vision for the development of the district.

Based on these initial findings from the research on South Aceh and also building on more general literature on the state of democracy in Indonesia and Aceh, in the section below I will present some tentative conclusions on problems with democratic representation in the South Aceh district. The assessment of the situation in South Aceh will build on the five areas that the research-team has been focusing on, but more specifically, the findings will be discussed relating to the democratic framework outlined in the theory chapter. The focus will thus be on three main problematic areas concerning democratic representation in Aceh, which many of the findings from the research can be related to.

Firstly, many of the problems seem related to an unclear definition of and relationship between the *demos* and the public affairs. Secondly, there seems to be an insufficiency of democratic intermediary channels for people to exercise popular control, and thirdly, many of the problematic issues identified can be related to a lack of capacity and thus also a lack of trust in the government institutions.

Because of the fragmentation of the *demos* and the public affairs, and the insufficient channels for democratic participation, actors' incentives to secure their own power do neither contribute to the further development of the district nor of the trust in the state institutions. In the following sections these three main issues will be elaborated on with regards to the overall situation in Indonesia, the more specific assessments of Aceh primarily based on the Demos-study, and finally this will be related to the findings from the research team in the South Aceh district.

4.1.1 Relationship Between the *Demos* and the Public Affairs

What Peter Houtzagers refers to as *polycentrism*, can be described more generally as fragmentation of the *demos*, the governance of public matters and their poor links by way of representation, and is a contemporary tendency (Törnquist, 2009d: 14). As Houtzager (2005: 5) writes, the focus among international development actors has been increasingly concerned with decentralization, participation and civil

society, and this view is often based on a general suspicion of the state and large political organizations. The common view is characterized through a statement from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) where the idea is that poverty reduction requires:

“Shifting decision-making powers closer to poor communities by developing authority to local government, ... [and] opening up local government to popular participation and building partnerships with civil society organizations” (Houtzager, 2005: 5).

A consequence of such *polycentrism* is that if the distinctions between the *demos* and the public affairs along the lines of territories, sectors and issues are not clear, the governance becomes more fragmented and it becomes more difficult for people to understand the chains of governance and responsibilities (Törnquist, 2010a: 32). In Indonesia in general this tendency has manifested itself through the major decentralization reforms initiated after the dismantling of the New Order regime, and there has been a focus on peoples participation through civil society and participatory forums. This has meant a tendency towards more community governance and a development of arenas where the local communities etc should decide certain aspects of the public affairs such as the priorities of development program budgets.

A consequence is that the public affairs in Indonesia in general have been depoliticized in favor of technocratic governance, market solutions and patronage based on ethnicity or religion, or ‘alternative patronage’ through political parties and civil associations (Törnquist, 2010e: 4).

In Aceh this tendency has been further affected by the fact that after the tsunami in 2004 there was a massive influx of NGOs and international donors in Aceh. To avoid elite capture of the reconstruction, and the general abuse of power and corruption in Aceh, a strategy from the donors’ side was to keep the reconstruction separate from political involvement by the local administration and government. The

BRR¹¹ (The Aceh-Nias Agency for Reconstruction and Rehabilitation) was established in mid-2005 to oversee the rebuilding of Aceh after the tsunami (McGibbon, 2006: 347), and there was an emphasize on the apolitical character of this body for securing the independent implementation of reconstruction (ICG, 2005: 16). This meant that powerful business actors prone to take advantage of the massive reconstruction funds was not able to influence politics to a large extent, but at the same time, this is also something that has prevented people from engaging in decision-making processes and the administration of reconstruction and economic development via elected leaders and the local government and administration (Törnquist, 2009a: 7-8). The reconstruction thus has to a large extent not been defined as a part of the public affairs over which the people should have control.

In the research on production development in the South Aceh district a general finding was that there is a great potential for production in the district, but that coordination between these different actors is lacking (Avonius, 2010c). The district is thus facing problems with poor infrastructure, poor drainage and irrigation systems for rice and palm oil production and insufficient measures to fight a major nutmeg disease (Törnquist, 2010e: 11).

In South Aceh in general, economic development is viewed as more important than areas such as health and education, but there still seems to be a lack of a comprehensive strategy for the development in the district. The research identified a range of involved organizations, stakeholders and actors but it turns out that in fact very few of them have functioned the way they are supposed to and have not been able to have much influence on decisions. Among the actors and stakeholders identified are farmers groups, youth groups, cooperatives, *Mukim* (an association of village leaders), *Seunebok* (traditional forest wise men institution), the *Panglima Laot* (traditional sea wise men institution), *Kadin* (Chamber of commerce) and also political parties, international donors and NGOs. The main problem seems to be a lack of coordination between these actors and the involved government agencies, in addition to unclear

¹¹ Badan Rehabilitasi dan Rekonstruksi

procedures and mechanisms for their involvement in decision-making processes. A general conclusion is thus that there is a range of involved actors but the lack of coordination and clarity of the responsibilities point to a problem with unclear definitions of who should be involved in deciding over which public affairs. A farmer that was interviewed during the field visit in South Aceh actually said that in a way, things was better with the authoritarian regime of Soeharto, because then one only had to relate to one program as compared to the range of different programs existing today.

One issue that in particular is contributing to a diffusion of governance is the role of the traditional *adat* institutions such as the *Seunebok* and the *Panglima Laot*. These are important and respected actors in the areas of agriculture and fishing, but it is still somewhat unclear whether these institutions are a part of the government or if they are a part of civil society. According to the law of governing of Aceh (LoGA) article 98:

“*Adat* institutions shall function and serve as a means for public participation in the Governing of Aceh and the governing of districts/municipalities in the areas of security, peace, harmony, and public order. Resolution of community social problems through traditional means shall be carried out by *adat* institutions” (LoGA, 2006).

It is also somewhat unclear how the *adat*-leaders are elected, but they are regulated on the district level and are the responsibility of the vice-regent. The *adat* institutions are also sub-ordinate to the *Wali Nanggroe* institution (LoGA, 2006), which was introduced in the special autonomy law from 2001 and is:

“A non-structured organization in its administration and a symbol of the preservation of (Acehnese) culture and tradition rather than be involved in any political decision making” (Special autonomy law on Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam (NAD) Law no. 18 of 2001).

Thus, due to its apolitical character the *Wali Nanggroe* is chosen by a group of expert decision-makers that is separate from the government structure. Hence, a major dilemma in this case is that the *adat* institutions cannot be democratic even if the *adat* leaders are elected, as long as it is sub-ordinate to the undemocratic *Wali Nanggroe* institution. Regarding these *adat* institutions, there seems to be a general optimism about these in South Aceh, and they are seen as a major arena for potential citizen participation if they are further developed.

In the research on access to justice the unclear relationship between areas controlled by the government and areas controlled by the *adat* institutions is further illustrated through a case study of a land dispute in a sub-district of South Aceh. The land dispute is about a land area that by the government is viewed as a part of the TNGL¹² national park, while the villagers perceive the area as customary land. The decision to establish new borders took place without any consultation with the local population although the villagers have clearly documented history on village *adat* areas. This case is thus illustrative of a system where the relationship between traditional law and public law is somewhat blurred. Further the impression from the preliminary research findings is that the dispute settlement mechanisms does not include the villagers and there is no forum where they can bring up their aspirations (Avonius, 2010b). Further, around 70% of the forest in the South Aceh district is currently conservation land. The dispute can thus also be related to a more general conflict between conservation of land and livelihood of the local population.

The researcher in South Aceh that looked into the education and the health sector found that the district government is not very active in regards to education and health, and there is a lack of district regulations. Also there is a distinction between the public schools that are under the domain of the education department, and the religious schools that are under the domain of the religious department (Avonius, 2010c).

¹² *Taman Nasional Gunung Leuser* is a national park of conservation areas in Indonesia.

In such a system of governance where the chains of responsibilities is unclear, people will have problems with knowing where to go with different issues, and continue to turn to influential individuals or contacts, and thus contribute to the sustainment of undemocratic practices. Another implication of the fragmentation of governance is that it is more difficult for people to hold decision-makers accountable than in a system where mandates and responsibilities are clear.

4.1.2 Intermediary Channels for Exercising Popular Control

The Demos-study concluded that in the realm of participation through political parties, the poor or those with low education is largely excluded because candidates for elections are required to have a certain degree of education and it is also impossible to build a party from below without having large funds at hand (Törnquist, 2010a: 17). The election channel is thus functioning while the influencing, and establishment of these parties is restricted to a few people in society.

Törnquist (2009b: 13) further argues that in Indonesia at large there is a shortage of institutionalized channels for interest and issue group participation beyond clientilism and good contacts. Popular organisations based on knowledge and special interest such as trade unions or environmental movements are in general lacking in Indonesia, and thus when pro-democrats do have a say it takes place primarily through lobbying, individual contacts or to some extent pressure groups (Törnquist, 2010a: 18), while groups of democrats rarely come together in organized politics (Törnquist, 2010e: 4).

A general problem in Indonesia is that the people are lacking democratic skills and experience because of decades with authoritarian rule. The separate issue- and interest-group representation that does exist is in general weak and undemocratic. Because of the lack of institutionalisation of the channels for participation a problem is that of people not learning what to expect from these, and as a consequence instead turn to the influential individuals or patrons which they do know what to expect from.

In the Aceh province, as in Indonesia in general, these problems of representation have contributed to a tendency amongst important actors as well as the people to approach governance institutions either by approaching for instance politicians or bureaucrats directly, outside the democratic framework, or to go via supplementary agents such as the media, NGOs and patrons and fixers rather than the potentially more democratically representative institutions such as political parties and popular-oriented interest-based organizations. This shortage of institutionalized channels for interest and issue group participation, beyond clientilism and good contacts is a problem throughout Indonesia, and in Aceh a direct approach for representation is more significant than representation through mediators. This is also the case when people do turn to interest organisations or political parties. Instead of turning to the organization or political party as a whole, they bypass the democratic organizational framework and instead turn to individuals within these organizations (Törnquist, 2010b: 92).

The preliminary findings from the research on the South Aceh district show that formal organising among workers for instance through trade unions is uncommon, and popular organisations representing various groups of actors are weak. In the health and education sector the arenas for participation appeared to be especially difficult to locate, and there seems to be a general lack of social movements that focus on health issues and education. The research on the area of production development indicates that ordinary people normally use traditional *adat* institutions when they are facing problems in this area. Formal associations such as farmers groups representing the landowners or the renters of the land do exist, but these associations are mostly used if there are possibilities for the attainment of government support or money. The farmers groups thus do not seem to make sense as a way of gaining influence for ordinary people, and it was indicated that the farmers groups were seen as a part of the elite. In the education and the health sector there are no social movements in South Aceh, and the main actors that have impact seem to be individuals in key positions such as school principals or directors of hospitals. In these sectors the findings from the research indicate that formal mechanisms for these actors to influence policy or approaching

government is lacking, so the initiatives becomes arbitrary and the result is a system consisting of liberal openings for individuals with good contacts and skills (Avonius, 2010c).

In the area of physical planning in South Aceh the researcher found that there exist several forums where people are enabled to participate, but observations and interviews suggested that people do not feel that these forums enable them to actually influence the decision-making. Three such forums for public participation in planning were explored with regards to popular participation. The *Musrenbang*¹³ is a national-wide deliberative multi-stakeholder forum that aims to promote processes for negotiating, reconciling and harmonizing differences between government and nongovernmental stakeholders and reaching collective consensus on development priorities and budgets. It was launched by the Indonesian government as a part of the decentralization process that was initiated in 1999, and is the principal instrument for public consultation. It is divided in a hierarchy of forums that function on community level, sub district level and the district level. At each level the goal is to reach a consensus, and there is a selection of representatives that should attend the *Musrenbang* at a higher level (USAID, 2007). A report 2007 report from USAID on the general functioning of the *Musrenbang* identifies some general limitations with the forum as an arena for participation. These limitations include uneven commitment from the regional leaders, limited transparency and information of budgeting by the regional governments leading to a lack of oversight and meaningful involvement of other stakeholders. Further the capacity of Civil Society Organizations to understand the planning process is limited and a general complexity of the issues that results in difficulties for actors to be involved in decision-making (USAID, 2007).

The PNPM (The National Program of Community Empowerment¹⁴) is a national project supported by the World Bank. President Yudhoyono launched the PNPM project in August 2006 as a policy and operational umbrella for all community empowerment in Indonesia, based on earlier programs such as the Kecamatan

¹³ *Musyawarah Rencana Pembangunan*

¹⁴ *Program Nasional Pemberdayaan Masyarakat.*

Development Program (KDP) and the Urban Poverty Project (UPP), and the program is now covering all villages and cities in the country. The PNPMs aim is to reduce poverty and improve local governance by providing resources to support productive development by communities. People are empowered to participate through a participatory planning process and through village meetings where proposals are offered and up to three are decided on. Further a delegation is selected for attending the district level meetings (Blair, 2010: 14).

“The overall PNPM objectives are being achieved through: (a) communities participating in an open planning process; (b) the provision of grants to communities directly and transparently to finance an open “menu” of poverty-alleviation activities; and (c) enhancing the capacity of central and local governments to partner with community organizations in the provision of services” (WorldBank, 2010b).

Because the PNPM is funded by the World Bank, there is a concern about what will happen to the program when the World Bank withdraws its support, and the responsibility is left to the government (Avonius, 2010b).

In addition to the existence of the *Musrenbang* forum and the PNPM, the Aceh Province also has its own community development program. The BKPG¹⁵ (Financial Assistance for Village Prosperity Program) is a program conveyed by the Aceh Governor Irwandi Yusuf on 13 July 2008, where the aim is to improve Aceh people’s welfare through community development and empowerment. The fund provided is 100 million Rupiah¹⁶ for each village, and it is used through an independent planning process by the communities, and the district government is obliged to provide co-funding for this program minimally at 50 million Rupiah per village (WorldBank, 2010a). The major focus of the BKPG has been on development of infrastructure. The province parliament has stated that they will not provide any more resources for the project so the future of the BKPG is somewhat insecure.

¹⁵ *Program Bantuan Keuangan Pemakmue Gampong*

¹⁶ 100 mill Indonesian Rupiah = approximately 11.000 USD.

The general assessment based on the preliminary research results from the South Aceh district was that the BKPG is the preferred arena for peoples' participation, and that the *Musrenbang* in comparison is considered to be manipulative. Because the *Musrenbang* institution functions on a range of levels from the village level to the provincial level, a problem is that the people's suggestions are often lost somewhere before the implementation. The general assessment is that for ordinary people the *Musrenbang* is not responsive to their suggestions, so even though the space for participation formally is in place it does not work in practice. According to the research-team the BKPG appears to be a more successful arena for participation by the people in the sense that people feel that there is an opening for actually influencing the decision-making. This seems to be to a large extent because it provides an arena where it is possible to participate outside of the embedded power structures, and ordinary people can actually participate without having to go through powerful individuals. Still the somewhat unsecure future of the PNPM and the BKPG is an example of that even though such arenas do exist, they are usually initiated in relation to specific government programs, and therefore normally they will cease to function at the end of such programs.

When these formal arenas for participation, do not make sense to ordinary people, the consequence is that instead, individual initiatives are often taken through contacts, and problems with nepotism, patronage and exclusive access remains common. The same problem is present in the education sector, where the key actors in South Aceh for influencing policy are the principals. The impression is that the principals have difficulties obtaining support from above, and the tendency is a fragmented system where influential individuals with good contacts and skills are favoured.

In conclusion, many of the problems identified in South Aceh seem to be related to people not having democratic channels to act through for gaining representation for their interests. Influential individuals often capture the open spaces for participation that does exist, additional representation is arbitrary, and there is a

feeling among people that they are not able to gain any influence. Further most people do not have the capacity to develop new channels for interest representation.

4.1.3 Capacity of and Trust in Government Institutions

This section will address some of the problems in Aceh that can be seen in relation to firstly some weaknesses with the capacity of the government, referring to the both the input and the output side of democracy. Further, and this is of course connected to and partly an outcome of the first point, a lot of the problems can be seen in relation to a general lack of trust in these government institutions.

A major reason for why people in Indonesia lack trust in the state is that corruption is widespread, and there is a general tendency of ‘wrong people in wrong places’. People are hired through friends and family and a lot of people working in the public administration are not qualified reference. Indonesia has a well-deserved reputation for being corrupt (Hadiz, 2010: 36). One can claim that in Indonesia in general there is a distinction between the formal state that consists of formal bureaucratic institutions, and the co-existence of a shadow state in which business men, bureaucrats, politicians and criminals interact on a regular basis (Nordholt, 2004: 33). Officials in the public administration uses their positions to further their own interests rather than those of the citizens (Antlöv & Wetterberg, 2010: 5), so the public administration is not necessarily subordinated to elected politicians and public law.

The most common complaint among newly elected representatives in Aceh is, according to the Demos-study, the weak and unreliable administration, and the relevant indicators in the survey was depressing regarding transparency and accountability of the public administration (Törnquist, 2009c: 21). The analysis based on the results from the Demos study also indicated that businessmen in Aceh were closely related to politicians and administrators. Earlier research on Aceh also points out that targeted employment in the public sector is a problem because being hired in

the public administration is very attractive and there is a tendency to hire friends and relatives.

Relating to the output-side of democracy this has to do with the implementation of democratic decisions by the public administration. A certain state capacity is necessary for assuring that the democratic decisions are actually implemented. If there is a democratic decision that is not properly implemented by the public administration, democracy is being severely undermined (Törnquist, 2010a: 32).

Aspinall (2009: 14) finds that earlier GAM actors have gained access to economic resources during the post-conflict phase by arranging to have GAM members and allies hired in various government agencies. Further, a lot of earlier GAM commanders have moved into business, especially in the construction industry, which is a very corrupt and politicized industry. Their chief activities involve building infrastructure (especially roads, bridges, and irrigation channels) or providing materials (sand, stones, and timber) for such work (Aspinall, 2009: 2). Throughout Indonesia, construction contracts are often awarded on the basis of political connections, and large proportions of contract costs are lost to corruption (Aspinall, 2009: 2).

Further there is a general problem in with what van Klinken (2009: 148) refers to as patronage democracy. Results from the Demos-study showed that the informants felt that most people identified themselves primarily in terms of their local ethnic community or, to a somewhat lesser extent, with their religious community, rather than with the Indonesian nation, and this tendency was especially strong in regions such as Papua and Aceh (van Klinken, 2009: 144). He further refers to a democratic deficit due to entrenched local inequalities, and local elites mainly identified as individuals associated with the state, that did not deliberately bypass the democratic framework, but manipulated the rules to suit their own interests. Still, this elite were not identified as being isolated from the population, but rather they had social and political roots, and exercised their influence through clientelistic practices or alternative patronage through private organisations (van Klinken, 2009: 144). These elite groups have

gained influence through their ability to win elections and are thus different from the New Order elite. A result is according to Törnquist (2010a: 16) that the interest in elections is both a crucial basis for democracy and a major drawback in the sense that democracy in Indonesia would not survive without this elite, while their existence is at the same time making democracy a domain of 'rotten politicians'. Aspinall (2010: 22) also points out the manner in which Indonesian democracy has proven able to absorb, accommodate, and serve the interests of powerful elite groups, but he also argues that this absorptive capacity has in fact contributed greatly to the stability and achievements of the democratic transition.

In Indonesia in general it is problematic that there has not developed a real alternative to the old authoritarian state. One reason for this is that the people who have been pro democracy have not wanted to ally with the people who have been pro a strong state because it is exactly the strong authoritarian state that has been viewed as a hindrance for democracy reference. There has been an extensive process of decentralization in Indonesia after the dismantling of the New Order regime, but it is questioned if this necessarily has led to more democracy and better governance. The decentralization process in Indonesia has led to what has been labelled changing continuities: 'Less state' does not automatically result in 'more democracy', and in order to develop democratic control and to guarantee the rule of law, there is in fact a need for a certain state capacity to overcome the persistence of old patrimonial patterns (Nordholt, 2004: 48).

The conflict between the state level and the local level concerns how the different levels are governed by elites. In Indonesia the decentralization is being affected by the fact that there are strong elites on both the state and the regional levels that are fighting for power (Hadiz, 2010: 3). For instance, existing local elites may capture the new local government, and decentralization will thus not lead to more democracy or equal representation.

In South Aceh there seems to be a general view that less state actually leads to more democracy¹⁷. This view that the state should be as little involved as possible can probably be related to the historical development of an Acehese identity based on rebellion and resistance against outside involvement, together with the view that Aceh is special. Because of its special region status Aceh also has more autonomy than other Indonesian provinces, for instance through the re-introduction of the customary *adat* institutions and the *Wali Nanggroe* as a symbol of the preservation of the Acehese culture and tradition. The preference of a lot of people for the *adat* institutions as an arena for people's participation can also be interpreted as a way of opposing the state and instead embrace the institutions that are based in the local community, even though these are not necessarily democratic.

“The weak and not trusted public governance has given way to ‘community’ governance which may benefit some, but not all, and only work locally and in certain sectors” (Törnquist, 2010e: 11).

Further, the research from South Aceh also found that a major problem is that the people working in government agencies are not qualified, and there is a lack of formal procedures and regulations for how people are being hired. According to the research on production development people often receive positions due to family relations (Avonius, 2010c). Further, 70% of the budget in the South Aceh district is spent on civil servants wages, which in turn have led to a major problem with limited budget funds.

¹⁷ This claim is based on a general impression from the field trip in South Aceh and on conversations with the researchers.

4.2 Linking the Findings to Democratic Representation

The point of departure for the discussion is as outlined in the theoretical framework Beethams (1999: 33) definition of the aim of democracy as popular control over public affairs on the basis of political equality, and three basic pillars are distinguished: The people, the public matters and the intermediary ways to exercise popular control of policymaking and implementation (Törnquist, 2009d: 10).

In short, research on the state of democracy in Indonesia indicates that the fundamental problem of democracy in Indonesia is that of weak popular representation (Törnquist, 2010a: 18). The researchers in South Aceh has aimed to map what actually exists of popular representation, and the conclusion so far is that the popular representation is limited and that this in turn is related to problems with a fragmentation of the *demos* and the public affairs, a lack of institutionalized channels for interest representation and participation and government institutions with weak capacity that are not trusted. The problems identified above are obviously connected and dependent on each other. These three overarching problems can in turn all be related to a need to further develop democracy beyond the holding of elections only.

Why are the findings from Aceh problematic in regards to the definition of democracy? The most problematic issue in Aceh seems to be related to the intermediary ways people have to exercise control of policymaking and the implementation. As of today the people in Aceh has only one major arena for obtaining popular control over public affairs on the basis of political equality, namely through elections. Even the elective channel can also be questioned if the people end up not having any party that represents their interest that they can vote for. The supplementary forms of popular control are for the most part not based on political equality in the sense that either the channels does not exist, or individual lobbying and patronage is still dominant. The somewhat unclear division of responsibility between the *adat* institutions and the government indicates that it is not unambiguous what are the public affairs that should be subject to popular control. Further there is a problem that relations between the state and the people are mediated by on one hand market

institutions and on the other hand communal groups or civil associations where non of these mediators are subject to democratic control and thus not accountable to the people (Törnquist, 2010a: 18).

5 Democratic Representation in Scandinavia

5.1 Does a Comparison with Scandinavia Make Sense?

By taking the main problems with representation in Aceh as a point of departure for reading into Scandinavian experiences, this opens up for a focused thematic analysis. Research on Indonesia and Aceh in general and the recent findings from South Aceh have illustrated that even though the challenges are many and wide-ranging, many of the issues are in fact related to popular representation and participation in governance (Törnquist, 2010e: 11). The questions that could be asked when reading into Scandinavian experiences are thus what processes and which specific turning points were essential historically for avoiding a fragmentation of the *demos* and the public affairs, for the developing of institutionalized additional representation beyond elections, and for developing a strong and trusted state. The idea is to identify the important turning points for this historical development in Scandinavia, and then more specifically trace the processes that led to the reaching of these decisive moments.

Because the two contexts of Aceh and Scandinavia are indeed different in almost every aspect, the aim is not to find out how this developed in Scandinavia and then try to copy this in Aceh. The idea is rather to take these problems as a point of departure for looking into how some of these problems have either been at least partially solved or avoided historically in Scandinavia, and then try to identify the processes that explain this positive outcome. If one can identify these decisive factors and trace how they came about one could possibly be one step closer to the deepening of democracy in a context such as Aceh.

By narrowing down the comparison to thematic fields more contextual analysis is possible (Törnquist, 2010e: 2). Further, by focusing on processes in contrast to identifying necessary structural preconditions, it is possible to identify what developments were the results of actual policy and political or actor-based decisions

rather than unique structural factors. This in turn allows for a comparison of any similar processes or actors can be identified in the otherwise different contexts. Of course the exact same processes will not be possible to recreate in Aceh because the actors and structures are not the same, but the aim is to see if it is some similar processes or actors that were important in Scandinavia can be identified in Aceh.

5.2 Mapping the Situation in Scandinavia

What is the situation in Scandinavia compared to Aceh on the actual existence of popular representation? In the following section the focus will be on mapping general tendencies in Scandinavia regarding the problems that were found to be essential in Aceh. The same categories will be used as in the discussion on the situation in Aceh, and the focus will be on the crucial issues that were identified. A main question to be answered is thus what possibilities exist for people in Scandinavia to achieve (democratic) representation, and how is this related to the definition of the *demos* and the public affairs, the intermediary channels for exercising popular control and the capacity of and trust in government institutions?

5.2.1 Relationship Between the *Demos* and the Public Affairs

In Scandinavia in general, the definition of the *demos* have traditionally been taken for granted. The question about who should be consulted in the decisions about different aspects of the public affairs can be subject to law, or it could be something that is not subject to law but is negotiated on. In Scandinavia this has not necessarily been subject to specific laws but still there has been a tradition for corporatist systems with mechanisms for the inclusion of interest organizations. This system for the inclusion of interest organizations and stakeholders in Scandinavia has been labelled societal corporatism, and its main characteristic is that the negotiations between the state and the interest organizations are formalized and institutionalized. This model

thus stands in contrast to state-corporatism where the state has virtually all control, and pluralism, which is recognized by looser contacts and lobbyism which gives the organizations less binding responsibilities (Nordby, 2004: 99; Rothstein & Trägårdh, 2007: 235).

This institutionalized relationship have enabled the state and the associations to confront new challenges and work out compromised solutions in a peaceful and cooperative manner (Rothstein & Trägårdh, 2007: 236). Moreover, the fact that the system was institutionalized contributed to actors knowing how the processes worked and what to expect, thus lowering the barriers for participation. Thus, in Scandinavia there was and to a large extent still is an institutionalized system for inclusion of the affected parties in decisions about public affairs. About the Swedish state in particular it has been argued that rather than acting as a powerful enforcer serving its own interest, the state serves more as a number of institutional spaces in which representatives from society meet to work out policies in a spirit of consensus and compromise (Rothstein & Trägårdh, 2007: 235).

In Norway, the Public Administration Act from 1967 also legally gives those affected by a case the right to be notified before decisions are made, the right to access documents relating to the case, and to complain about individual decisions to a superior public administrative body. As a general rule these documents should also be available for the parts that are not involved in a case such as the media (Christensen, et al., 2007: 64). Further, it is also a common practice in both Norway and Sweden of appointing governmental commissions for aiding in the preparation of new laws, or developing new policies. These commissions are usually composed of people representing political parties and the organizations having a special interest or competence in the particular subject matter (Trägårdh, 2007a: 260-261).

Another reason for the relatively clear definition of the public affairs in Scandinavia is the extensive universalistic welfare state. Esping-Andersen (1990: 3) distinguishes between three general types of welfare state regimes. These three are different in their logic of organization, stratification and societal integration, and have

origins in different historical forces and follow different developmental trajectories. The liberal welfare state is characterized by means-tested assistance, modest universal transfers or modest social insurance plans. It is based on traditional, liberal work-ethic norms, and entitlements are strict and often associated with stigma. Typical examples of this welfare regime are found in the United States, Canada and Australia. The corporatist or Christian democratic welfare state is conservative and rights are normally attached to class and social status. The church is an important actor, and traditional family-hood is viewed as important. Social insurance is normally based on the family as a unit and not on individuals, so it typically excludes non-working wives and services such as day-care is underdeveloped. In this type of welfare state the provision of welfare is not left to the market, but the welfare state has not redistributive effects. Examples of this welfare state regime are found in Austria, France, Germany and Italy (Esping-Andersen, 1990: 26-28).

The social democratic or Scandinavian welfare regime then is characterized by universalism, and aims at being a welfare state that promotes an equality of the highest standards instead of an equality of minimal needs. The manual workers enjoy rights identical to white-collar employees or civil servants, with a universal insurance system where benefits are graduated according to accustomed earnings. The welfare state takes responsibility for task that has traditionally been taken care of by the family such as day-care and caring for the aged, something that enables women to choose more freely. Full employment is an important part of the welfare states commitment (Esping-Andersen, 1990: 26-28).

The universality and the fact that the welfare states in Scandinavia are so encompassing, means that as compared to more liberal systems, most aspects of peoples life are viewed as part of the public affairs, and thus something that the state should take responsibility for. This is further illustrated by the fact that the words for “state” and “society” have been used as synonyms in Scandinavia, even though this might have changed with the introduction of the concept of ‘civil society’ (Trägårdh, 2007b: 3). The recent banking crisis has illustrated the attitude that also the economy and market is the responsibility of the government.

5.2.2 Intermediary Channels for Exercising Popular Control

The Scandinavian countries in general score very high on international surveys on participation in organizations, and representation through trade unions and formal organizing among workers has been particularly strong in Scandinavia. 49% of the participants in the Norwegian citizenship study¹⁸ from 2001 stated that they were members of a trade union or an employee organization. Further, 17 % of the respondents said that they were members of an organization or association where they could discuss, or take other measures against unreasonable decisions made by the municipal board or the Parliament. 28 % of the respondents stated that they during the last twelve months have contacted an organization or association to try to improve or counteract decay in society (Strømsnes, 2003: 89, 92).

The political parties in Scandinavia have traditionally taken the form of mass organisations with extensive membership, thus including ordinary citizens. Hence, there has not been the same degree of elite-capture in Scandinavia as is common in many developing countries, but a recent tendency in both Sweden and Norway is that in general the participation and activity through political parties have declined, and people are instead more active through demonstrations, contact with decision-makers, the media and other ways of affecting policy (Østerud, et al., 2003: 79). The most common intermediary channels for representation in Scandinavia are thus through that of political society or civil society, which is also closely linked to the state institutions, while representation through informal leaders is uncommon.

Further, much of the representation takes place through the democratic framework where the government is accountable through transparent and responsive institutions, including mechanisms for people to complain if they are not satisfied.

¹⁸ Citizenship in this study does not refer to the legal definition of the term, but to the sociological definition (Strømsnes, 2003). The Norwegian citizenship study is from 2001 and is a survey based on a selection of 5000 persons in the age 18 to 84 years. The selection was drawn first by stratification by county, and next by random selection in each strata (Strømsnes, 2003: 37).

5.2.3 Capacity of and Trust in Government Institutions

According to Lars Trägårdh (2007b: 1) the Swedish political tradition is marked by a paradox between on the one hand the strong centralist state and on the other hand the open democratic society where citizens enjoy easy access to political leaders and political processes. Sweden scores comparatively high on both measures of trust, social capital and membership in voluntary organizations *and* on the involvement of the state and high taxes and public spending (Trägårdh, 2007b: 3).

In Scandinavia in general, trust in the state institutions is very high. The bureaucracies have a strong position, and there are specified and transparent procedures for employment of civil servants. According to the Norwegian Civil Service Act positions in the public administration should be publicly announced, and there are specified procedures for employment of the positions (Christensen, et al., 2007: 73). Concerning the people that are employed in the public administration this is related to the degree of meritocracy in society, and how this has historically been defended in Scandinavia. There also exist procedures for evaluations and a chain of responsibility with a clear division of responsibility. Politicians have to follow up on the implementation as well and not just on the decision making process, and there are independent bodies whose task is to control government activities. There is also a strong tradition for documents being made public and transparency in the public sector.

The public administrations capacity to implement policy impartially has to do with state capacity. An important factor in Scandinavia is that there is a relatively strong state with resources and capacity. There are similarities between Norway and Sweden when it comes to the separation of power between the centre and the periphery. Even though the Scandinavian states are associated with strong states, Sellers and Lindström (2007: 610) finds that the distinctive infrastructure of local

government that accompanies the social democratic welfare state is in crucial respects among the most decentralized in the advanced industrial world.

There are two main reasons why the egalitarian universalistic welfare states are dependent on strong local governments: First of all a strong local government is necessary to carry out the welfare state policy. Secondly a strong local government can be an important link between national government and local civil society organizations (Sellers & Lidström, 2007: 610-611).

5.2.4 Recent Developments: Towards Fragmentation of Democracy?

“The parliamentary chain of government is weakened in every link; parties and elections are less mobilizing; minority governments imply that the connection between election results and policy formation is broken; and elected assemblies have been suffering a notable loss of domain” (Østerud & Selle, 2006: 25)

The most recent Norwegian Power and democracy study¹⁹ (Østerud, et al., 2003: 295) conclude that democracy is being weakened. The parliamentary chain of governance is being weakened: The elective channel is being reduced, while other channels for participation and influence is being widened. Among the important challenges to the democracy in Scandinavia are globalization and Europeanization that has led to a development where the chains of responsibilities and the definition of public affairs have become less clear. Nordby (2004: 107) finds that the corporatist structures in the Scandinavian countries are no longer as dominating as earlier, and elements of pluralism are gaining more influence. This general development may thus not be entirely different from that of *polycentrism* that has been identified to be problematic in Aceh.

¹⁹ These findings are based on the Norwegian power and democracy study, but the tendencies are the same in Sweden.

Further, the Scandinavian populations are becoming more pluralistic as a result of the globalisation and the massive immigration. This means that the definition of the *demos* that earlier have been taken for granted, are becoming a challenge in the Scandinavian countries. Further, the immigration and globalisation also have lead to a more pluralistic society concerning religion, and there is an increasing debate around the relationship between religious customs and public law.

The weakening of the parliamentary chain of governance through the decrease in people using the electoral channel, while additional channels for participation is being widened, could also be seen in relationship with the findings from Aceh where people prefer to go outside of the traditional channels such as political parties. The main challenge with this development is that these additional channels are not necessarily subjected to any democratic control.

Thus, a tendency is that some vital elements of the Scandinavian model have been weakened. Hence, if these elements of the Scandinavian democracy should be sustained, investigating what historical processes were essential in this development is also necessary for the investigation of why democracy is being weakened.

5.2.5 Summing Up the Main Points

Many of the problems that was found to be essential in Aceh in relation to the further development of popular representation seems to be functioning quite well in Scandinavia. Still, recent developments reveal a tendency where some of these factors are being weakened in Scandinavia. Based on the previous outline of the situation in Scandinavia, there are some essential developments that need to be further investigated.

Concerning the relatively clear definition of the public affairs, the aspects that should be further looked into, is the development of the social corporatist system and the universal and extensive welfare state, in contrast to for instance state corporatism or a Christian democratic welfare state. Regarding the definition of the *demos* this has

not been subject to dispute historically but is an emerging problem that should be further looked into, but in another context.

Concerning the intermediary channels for participation, what is essential is to identify the processes that can explain the development of the extensive participation in political parties and organizations such as trade unions. One could also question why there does not seem to have been a major problem in Scandinavia with representation through informal leaders.

Regarding the issue concerning state capacity and trust in government institutions, the questions that are essential to investigate further are how come people in Scandinavia have developed such high levels of trust in the state? Further, how did there develop a system where transparency of public administration, and procedures for employment were essential. And lastly, how could the strong local governments be combined with a strong state?

6 Tracing the Development in Scandinavia

6.1 The General Situation Before the Democratization

When looking into the historical developments of these issues that might explain the somewhat ‘positive’ outcomes regarding popular representation, it is first necessary to identify some of the important actors and structures in Scandinavia before the development of democracy.

First of all, the conditions in Scandinavia were not as different from the post-colonial countries as the core of the western countries was (Törnquist, 2010e: 4). The Scandinavian countries were relatively poor, and in the mid-nineteenth century Norway and Sweden were underdeveloped nations of peasants and fishermen in particular (Esping-Andersen, 1985: 41). Further there was also high economic inequality (Moene & Wallerstein, 2003: 5)

In Norway this relative poverty, together with the relative strength of the farmers as compared to other classes, contributed to the fact that there did not develop a strong upper class, and Norway was comparatively more egalitarian than Sweden in the nineteenth century. For instance had Norway from 1814 a one-chamber system, and the abolishment of the aristocracy in Norway only concerned a few individuals (Kjeldstadli, 2007: 2) while in Sweden the upper house was not abolished until 1918 (Danielsen, 1995: 313). Still, even though Sweden had nobility, the relative poverty of the state as well as the peasants’ abilities to obtain independence through alliances with the king, the aristocracy in Sweden had been severely weakened in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Esping-Andersen, 1985: 48).

Universal male suffrage was established as late as in 1917 in Sweden, with general suffrage following four years later. Another difference between Norway and Sweden in this period is thus the relatively later introduction of universal suffrage in Sweden than in Norway, and the later organizing of the national political parties and

introduction of parliamentary government (Danielsen, 1995: 313). The industrialisation also came comparatively late in comparison with the rest of Europe. This meant that the extension of the right to vote and the parliamentarism came comparatively early in the industrialisation process.

Norwegian peasants were comparatively independent, they were legally free, something which could possibly be explained by the difficulties of controlling such a scattered population (Kjeldstadli, 2007: 2), and in the period from 1660 the peasants worked their way towards becoming a freeholder that owned the means of production (Danielsen, 1995: 163). The relationship in Norway between the population in general and the urban elite was not dominated by the purchase of labour, but of trade, and the relationship was further characterized by a lack of the feudal exploitation common in the rest of Europe (Danielsen, 1995: 171). In Norway the otherwise free peasants and the middle classes were fundamental in the building of the independent state and democracy after Danish and Swedish dominance.

6.1.1 How did the Social Corporatist System Develop?

In Sweden, in particular but also to a certain extent in Norway, the corporate system had long historical roots back to the guild system. These corporatist institutions in Sweden were first established on the local level with corporative organized public labour exchanges (Rothstein & Trägårdh, 2007: 238). In Sweden the pre-democratic state opened up for inclusion of interests such as the labour movement and on the central level there was organized almost weekly meetings between state officials and representatives from the workers organizations (Rothstein & Trägårdh, 2007: 248).

The fact that the farmers in Scandinavia had a relatively autonomous position in society resulted in that they to a large extent had their own organisations. Because the Scandinavian states in the nineteenth century was characterized as less repressive and lacking important feudal heritage, compared to continental Europe, the state was thus more open to popular demands and this manifested itself through independent political

representation of peasants in the parliament (Rothstein & Trägårdh, 2007: 234-235). There were neither a strong repressing elite, and in the struggle for democratisation, it developed a pact between farmers, landowners, workers and the liberals.

State institutions like the parliament and government have played an important role in setting policy, and so has processes such as elections, but the role of the deliberative and inclusive democratic processes that occurred outside of these contexts is emphasized as being equally important for the development of the corporatism in Scandinavia. By arranging an arena for trustful and close cooperation between the state and various social and organized movements through commissions, committees and meetings with civil society organizations, a pattern was established and this in turn spilled over to other areas such as agriculture, temperance questions and relationship between the state and the organization of small companies (Rothstein & Trägårdh, 2007: 250).

Formal democracy was established comparatively late in Sweden and it followed after a struggle between the labour movement and other popular movements such as the temperance movement and the free churches, and the traditional elites on the other side. Thus the state was not strong enough to not have to make compromises and alliances during the democratization.

Further, Rothstein and Trägårdh (2007: 231) argue that the Swedish case of extensive collaboration between the state and voluntary associations, can be explained by the specific structure of the pre-democratic Swedish state that was centralised but not closed, bureaucratic and professional but not especially authoritarian and differentiated but not without central coordination of policy. In Norway a range of voluntary organizations was established from the mid-nineteenth century. These grew out of broad-based social movements in civil society and normally addressed a particular welfare issue, such as the Red Cross. Because of the absence of a rich and beneficent bourgeoisie and the relative subordination of the churches, these organizations did not have enough funding to become an alternative to public

responsibility for social welfare (Halvorsen & Stjernø, 2008: 11). Instead of becoming an alternative to the state, these organizations became closely linked to it.

This contributed to the development of a mutual trust and the close cooperation between state institutions and the civil society associations (Rothstein & Trägårdh, 2007: 231). In the interwar period the belief in the free market and capitalism was replaced by a view that the regulation and planning from the state was necessary (Danielsen, 1995: 314). The involvement and active role of the state also meant that interest could have an incentive to organize to affect the government policy. Because the state was involved it also had incentives to make the different interest groups and potential voters as satisfied as possible, and thus negotiate with them. The crisis management in Norway in the 1930s was based on close cooperation between the state and the industrial organizations (Danielsen, 1995: 330).

The main foundation for the 'modern' corporatism was thus developed in the 1930s, but not perfected until after the second world war, when the social democratic party in Norway were able to mobilize consensus between all the parties around an economic program designed to rebuild the country after the war, and with the slogan of 'work for everyone' (Esping-Andersen, 1985: 216). In Sweden the situation was somewhat different due to the neutrality during the war, and there was not the same consensus between the political parties, but from the beginning of the 1950s the Swedish social democratic party also led a program of solidaristic wage bargaining, where the focus was on reducing income inequalities and establish universal welfare schemes. The logic behind these economic policies was a close cooperation between the state, the trade unions and the employer organisations that combined the employers demands for economic efficiency with the trade unions demands for equal rights for workers through collective wage agreements (Moene & Wallerstein, 2003: 9-10).

This has in turn contributed to the fact that the Scandinavian countries are among the most egalitarian countries in the world (Moene & Wallerstein, 2003: 10). Because the employers organisations also was included in the negotiations through the corporative channel, and thus were able to influence the economic policy, a sort of

consensus was established where the bourgeois parties also have been supportive of large parts of the social democratic policy.

6.1.2 Explaining the Development of the Universal Welfare State

The development of the universal welfare state has to be seen in relation to the development of social democracy. The foundation of the development of Scandinavian social democracy can be traced back to the last part of the 19th century and the ideas of Eduard Bernstein. After the orthodox Marxism had developed as a reaction against the social inequality and poverty the industrial revolution with the following introduction of capitalism had brought with it, it eventually became clear that Marxist predictions about the capitalisms self-destruction was not inevitable.

Socialists in Scandinavia, and elsewhere, realised that to be able to reach their political goals, it was not enough to only sit and wait for capitalism to destroy itself, but there was a need for political action. Human action could of course be violent revolution as the Leninist view was. But within this group of socialists it also developed a so-called revisionist camp. The focus of these revisionists was that their political goals could be reached by making them attractive and desirable for the population, rather than force it through revolution. According to Bernstein, this could be done within the framework of democracy by actively work towards reformation of the existing system. This idea became the foundation for the social-democracy (Berman, 2006: 13-14). The social-democratic parties in Norway and Sweden were founded in respectively 1887 and 1889. These parties were then first and foremost closely related to an urban working-class and the already existing trade unions. In Scandinavia the development of the social democratic parties took place at the same time as the democratisation, with the development of parliamentarism and the extension of the right to vote (Esping-Andersen, 1985: 73-83)

The first years of their existence, the social democratic parties obtained relatively little support, but proceeding from 1905 the support grew steadily in both

Norway and Sweden. In 1914 and 1915 in Sweden and Norway the social democratic parties gained respectively 36% and 32% of the votes. This growth can to a large extent be explained due to the development of universal suffrage and the mobilisation of the voters. Still, the social democrats could not get a majority in the parliament, and the years leading up to the 1930s were characterised by shifting minority governments. The social democratic parties had yet to develop a clearly formulated political platform, and the Norwegian social democrats experimented with a more revolutionary platform and was member of the communist international (Comintern) between 1919-23 (Esping-Andersen, 1985: 73-83).

However, around 1930 the Scandinavian countries, as well as the rest of Europe and the west, were affected by the economic recession. This recession contributed to the social democratic parties becoming the dominant parties in the Scandinavian countries. Berman (1998: 381) points out that an important reason for this development was that because of the economic recession it became important to put an ending to the political instability of the minority governments. To do this it was necessary to establish a majority coalition. Berman's focus is on the Swedish example, but a similar process took place in Norway as well.

The common denominator for the social democratic parties in this period was that they went from approaching the working class exclusively, to approaching the population as a whole with their political strategy. As Esping-Andersen (1985: 77) emphasises, the party rhetoric were changed from being about socialism to democracy, and instead of appealing to the working class they now appealed to the people. In Sweden this mode of thinking was central in the party throughout the interwar period, and the idea about the peoples home (*folkhemmet*) was emphasised (Berman, 1998: 384). The politics of the social democratic parties was a politic of universality where the welfare should reach all people and not solely the working class. Both in Norway and Sweden the social democratic parties from the 1930s followed convergent politics based on similar alliances with the peasantry, that permitted Keynesian full-employment policies combined with negotiations towards comparatively equal wages

(preventing imbalances and supporting modernisation of the economy) and social reform (Esping-Andersen, 1985: 88).

The extensive welfare states in Scandinavia are thus to a large extent a result of the social democratic parties strategy and politics. But still the concept of universalism is not solely a result of the social democratic ideology but also the result of the fact that the social democrats had to make compromises with the political representatives of different social classes to be able to form government (Halvorsen & Stjernø, 2008: 16). No party or interests has been strong enough by itself to obtain power and because of this there was a development where different actors realized that to get things done they had to cooperate and make compromises and alliances. In Scandinavia the interest organizations has also been forced to participate in a public discussion to achieve impact. Special interests could not achieve any impact only based on their special interest, but they saw the need to argue on a universal ground.

An additional explanation for the universality of the welfare state is thus the fact that the social democrats had to build alliances with, and promote policy for farmers and other groups in society to win elections and to form government, and also that the different interests organizations has been included in decision-making through the corporatist system

6.1.3 Explaining the Extensive Participation in Organizations

One explanation for the extensive participation in organizations and trade unions is that the Scandinavian countries also chose an electoral system with proportional representation, something that meant that it would pay off to maximise the voter turnout for the political parties. The political parties was thus to a large extent mass-parties based on membership. This was especially true for the social democratic parties who allied with the trade unions, and for a long period of time the membership in the party and the trade union was common.

An important explanatory factor for the high participation rate in organizations in Scandinavia is thus the strategy of the social democratic party with its close cooperation with trade unions and the creation of local party branches and the focus on local activities such as sports-associations through the party organisations. This led to the inclusion of a lot of people and people got organizational experience that functioned as a learning process and enabled them to participate in and develop new channels for interest representation.

The abolition of economic privileges for the elite in Norway in the mid nineteenth century paved the way for new constellations of interests and a widespread creation of associations. These organizations had an important effect in the sense that they established conditions for unified action across the traditional boundaries based on function, locality and region (Danielsen, 1995: 265). Another important effect of these organizations was the training they gave people in taking part in political activities and being a part of public life, because many of the matters these organizations fought for could only be resolved through political means (Danielsen, 1995: 265). The earlier existing 'vacuum' of possibilities for the opposition to channel its interests also was being filled in the period of the 1870s by in addition to the forming of organizations, the development of a range of newspapers and the holding of political rallies (Danielsen, 1995: 265).).

Early strong social or popular movements in Scandinavia can be exemplified for instance through the Christian lay movement with their focus on temperance (Kjeldstadli, 2007: 7). In Norway, the Thrane movement was the first organized popular movement in Norway and it represents one of the most remarkable outbreaks of popular protest in Norwegian history (Danielsen, 1995: 256). The aim of the movement was on the one hand a demand for one man, one vote, and on the other hand it also believed that the king should act personally to protect the interest of the common man. The movement embraced at the beginning workers, day laborers and craft workers, and spread to also include crofters, landless agricultural laborers and petty peasantry, and could in some places be viewed as a revolt of the entire primary sector against the bureaucracy and the capitalism (Danielsen, 1995: 256).

6.1.4 How come Scandinavians have so Much Trust in the State?

In contrast to Putnam's argument about social trust being created through participation in civil society, Rothstein (2004a: 114) suggests that general trust is in fact created through the existence of impartial government institutions. The argument is thus that the causal link between the state and trust does not go from civil society to state institutions, but instead that certain state institutions produces individuals and organizations with high social trust (Rothstein, 2004b: 16). This means that the high trust found in the Scandinavian countries actually could be interpreted as a result of the universal welfare state and the independent public administration.

Trägårdh (2007a: 260-261) further suggests that a key to understanding the strength of social capital and trust in the state, is the sense of participation and having a stake that is promoted by involving the institutions of civil society, and thus the citizens, in the making of law and policy. Hence, the argument that is posed is that public policy will have greater legitimacy when it is at least partly designed and deliberated upon with input from below and people are involved in other ways than only by electing politicians. He emphasizes the role of government commissions where representatives from political parties as well as from the organizations deemed to have special interests are included. Another important aspect is that drafts of new policies and laws are sent out to involved stakeholders so that they can comment or counter the proposals (Trägårdh, 2007a: 261). In this respect, the high levels of trust can also be explained by the existence of the social corporatist system where stakeholders are included in decision-making processes.

6.1.5 Development of the Impartial Public Sector

Concerning the public administration, the Swedish civil service was clearly in a state of decay at the dawn of the nineteenth century, characterized by purchasing of

posts, mismanaging and holding of multiple offices at the same time and use their positions for their personal interests (Rothstein, 2004b: 17). The public administration in Scandinavia has thus earlier faced similar problems to those identified in Aceh.

Concerning the people that are employed in the public administration this is related to the degree of meritocracy in society, and how this has historically been defended in Scandinavia. From early on the jurist professionals dominated the public administration in Norway, and on a later point in history the social economists and the political scientists gained larger influence. Education has thus historically been the legitimate criterion for recruitment to positions in the public administration (Christensen, et al., 2007: 90). In Norway, from 1736 a law exam was required for legal officers, but positions in the public service were to a large extent based on heritage, family links or contacts (Danielsen, 1995: 181).

The separation of powers and alliance system has led to a tradition for cooperation and openness. Because the state had to make compromises with other interests in the process of building a strong state during the democratization, these other interests also got access to the state and could demand more openness and transparency.

Concerning the role of the public administration there is a difference between Norway where the politicians generally have more power over the bureaucracy, and Sweden where the bureaucracy normally is more powerful in implementing the political decisions according to laws and regulations. But in both cases there has been a strong tradition for that the bureaucrats should be able to act according to politically decided laws and regulations and not have to follow detailed interventions by the politicians.

In 1814, when Norway formed a union with Sweden, the centralized and hierarchical state was established. From 1814-1884 the state system is referred to as the civil servant state because legally trained top administrative leaders dominated the state apparatus (Christensen, 2004: 25). 'The fall of the public servant state' should not be interpreted as meaning a reduction of the significance of the bureaucracy, but rather

it involved a development towards a role sharing between the political decision making institutions on the one hand and the bureaucracy on the other (Danielsen, 1995: 269). Here there is a distinction between Norway where the politicians generally have more power over the bureaucracy, and Sweden where the bureaucracy normally is more powerful in implementing the political decisions according to laws and regulations.

During the period between 1884 and 1940 there were a lot of changes in the structure of the public administration in Norway. Several new ministries were created and many of these were created on the basis of demands from interest groups and in the creation of the agricultural ministry business organizations were central (Christensen, et al., 2007: 31). This indicates that the public administration has been developed in accordance with, and been responsive to important interests in the society.

6.1.6 How could Decentralization be Combined with a Strong State?

Although formally Norway was in a union with Sweden and did not have its own representation abroad, the union was to a large extent more personal than based on comprehensive institutional arrangements (Danielsen, 1995: 219). In Norway the powerful tradition of management from the centre dated back to the union with Denmark (Danielsen, 1995: 259). The first development in Norway away from political life being preoccupied by an elite was the division of the Parliament into two parties, formalized with the creation of the parliamentary parties of the Liberals (*Venstre*) and the Conservatives (*Høyre*) in 1884 and resulting in the introduction of parliamentarism. This in turn paved the way for an extension of the franchise to also include men with an income above a certain limit (Danielsen, 1995: 263).

Decentralization can be viewed as a part of the process of building a strong state that is universal and not fragmented. The conclusion of Seller's and Lindström's study is that the strong local governments predated the social democratic welfare state

in Scandinavia and in fact is an important cause for its development. Swedish municipalities are based on the free farmers and their demands on local jurisdiction. In Norway local autonomy within the unitary state was already legally secured in 1837 (Østerud, 2005: 706-707). In the process of making a strong state; for certain cases to be centralized, the state had to give something back to the municipalities. In Norway, the local government law of 1837 could be said to represent a compromise between a centralizing ideology manifested through the *embetsmenn*, and a wish for transfer of power to local bodies represented by the peasantry. The local authorities got jurisdiction to carry out certain tasks in areas such as education and poor relief, but still under control of the state, so that the local governments could be said to serve as the executive arms of the central government (Danielsen, 1995: 260). This could be related to Rose's (2004: 180) argument that an important reason for the well functioning relations between the regional and state level in Scandinavia is that the local governments have not been viewed as a threat to the state, but as an active tool in the pursuit of national policy goals.

6.2 Summing up the Main Points

In the above section the aim has been to trace the development behind some of the issues that was found to be essential in explaining why issued found to be problematic in relation to the popular representation in Aceh, seems to be functioning quite well in Scandinavia. The tracing of the developments in this thesis are based on some of the major tendencies, but more extensive research should be performed with the aim of investigating these processes more thoroughly.

When looking into the development of the social corporatism, many of the important factors were actually historical structures. There were important historical roots back to the guild system, and the further development of cooperation between state and organizations are explained by structural factors such as the strength of the state, the social positions of different groups in society and the relative weakness of

the churches. Still, when looking at the more recent development of the corporatism in Scandinavia, this is not the case. The political decision about the need for state involvement in regulating the market and labour seems to be the most important for explaining the institutionalized system of consultation between the state and organizations. The early developments and foundations for social corporatism thus has to be viewed in terms of structural preconditions, while the institutionalization of the system at a later point in time was primarily due to political decisions.

Regarding the development of the universal welfare state is closely linked to the policies of the Social Democratic Party, and the specific strategy of appealing to the ‘people’ as a whole instead of only appealing to the workers. In the process of developing a universal welfare state actual political decisions seems to have played an essential role. The political role of the Social Democratic Parties can be said to have contributed to the extensive participation in organizations through the development of local party branches, and the close cooperation with trade unions.

For explaining the high levels of trust in Scandinavia researchers such as Rothstein (2004a) claims that this is in fact a result of actual politics of the impartial implementation by the public administration. This is thus also related to the universalism of the welfare state that contributes to making the impartial implementation easier than for instance systems with means testing. Further Trägårdh (Trägårdh, 2007a) argues that the corporatism and the use of government commissions contributes to creating trust. Hence, both the arguments for explaining the development of high levels of trust are based on politics.

In regards to the two last points concerning the capacity of and trust in government institutions, the independent public administration and the combination of a strong state and strong local governments, can primarily be explained by looking at historical structures in pre-democratic Scandinavia. Still, Rose (2004: 180) also argues that the already existing strong local governments have been viewed as an active tool for the central state in the pursuit of policy goals, and thus partly explains it as a strategy of the state for securing legitimacy.

In sum, the situation that are mapped in Scandinavia relating to these issues appears to boil down to a combination of in some cases already existing structures, and a primacy of political action to further develop popular participation. In some areas such as the development of the universal welfare state, this primacy of politics seems to be particularly important as an explanation.

7 **Thematic Comparison of Aceh and Scandinavia**

In this chapter the aim is to answer the research question: *what, if any, Scandinavian historical experiences can be used as a source of inspiration in efforts to improve the condition of democratic representation in Aceh?*

In the previous chapter the aim was to investigate some of the processes behind developments that are believed to have been essential in the development of democratic popular representation in Scandinavia. The findings were that most of these developments involved the existence of some essential structural preconditions, but it also seems that some of the processes to a large extent are results of political decisions and an active state.

When analysing Scandinavian experiences on the basis of problems generated in the context of Aceh, it has become clear that the conditions in pre-democratic Scandinavia were not that different from the conditions in Aceh today. Further the analysis has shown that Scandinavia in fact have some experiences with fighting or overcoming problems related to some of the areas deemed to be problematic for the development of popular representation in Aceh. Moreover, recent research on Scandinavian democracy finds that the chains of representation are being weakened and that there are tendencies towards a fragmentation of governance. Because of these common problems with assuring the aim of democracy through popular representation, it is clear that by way of more comparative thematic studies, it should indeed be possible both for Aceh to draw some lessons from Scandinavia, but also the other way around, that Scandinavia can draw some lessons as well.

To be able to answer if Aceh can actually learn from Scandinavia, more research is needed though. What can be done on the basis of this analysis is to make some suggestions about which specific historical processes in the development of popular representation than might be relevant for Aceh. Because of the differences in

contexts, and the fact that it is not possible to construct a set of preconditions, I will focus on what can be called a primacy of politics.

7.1 Sources of Inspiration: the Primacy of Politics

When analyzing the processes leading to the establishment of features essential for the democratic participation in Scandinavia, the most essential factor for explaining many of the developments seems to be the actual policies of the social democratic parties in the 1930s and after the Second World War. The social democratic parties also played an important role for the development of the high levels of participation in organizations and trade unions. Further, the developments towards social corporatism, high levels of participation in organizations, high levels of trust in the state and the combination of strong local governments and a strong state with capacities to implement policy, are all explained at least partially by an active role of the state. The main lessons from Scandinavia that thus could be suggested as some sources of inspiration for the further development of popular representation in Aceh could firstly be the importance played by political parties with electorates based in mass-organizations, and a close cooperation with trade unions, and secondly the important role that has been played by the state in these developments.

During the discussions with the research team in South Aceh, a more specific recommendation was the formation of comprehensive development committees for planning and facilitating welfare based growth and consisting of relevant experts and ‘stakeholders’, in addition to a parallel public investment bank operating on basis of market principles, but in accordance with long term guarantees to the committee. This recommendation was by the local researchers viewed as a feasible solution that in fact would address many of the problems in South Aceh (Törnquist, 2010e: 12).

The approach to democracy in Indonesia are as mentioned earlier affected by a liberal focus on decentralization, cooperation with NGOs, and civil society organizations as the main way of promoting participation. Thus, the lessons from this analysis is that in the case of Scandinavia, the relative success of democratic

participation seems to be founded in the importance of a strong state with capacities, and participation through political organizations closely related to the state through corporatist institutions. The tendencies that are taking place today with the weakening of these factors are in turn seen as problematic in relation to the democratic chain of governance. A change in the participation towards less political parties, and more civil society are seen as weakening popular representation, and globalization and the existence of an increasing number of NGOs are leading to a fragmentation of the public matters. There is thus also a potentially very important lesson for Scandinavia as well in this research, in the sense that for sustaining vital elements of the Scandinavian model for democracy, there is also a need for investigating how this model can fit into a global context (Törnquist, 2010e: 5).

7.1.1 Recent Experiences from Other Contexts

Törnquist (2010e: 11) argues that in addition to investigating the combating of similar problems as the ones identified in Aceh, decades ago in Scandinavia, another and much more recent is the efforts at decentralised participatory governance in Brazil and in the Indian state of Kerala.

In Harriss' (2006) research on cities in India and South America he finds that in Latin American cities such as Sao Paulo and Porto Alegre where there has been successful participatory budgeting, there exists an associative network which link state and societal actors through interpersonal, media and/or inter-organizational ties. He also argues that this would not have been possible without the support and involvement from political parties, so that the "new" politics of civil society is actually closely linked with the "old" politics of political parties (Harriss, 2006: 10).

Further it is pointed out that in historical experiences from contexts such as Latin America, Kerala the development of institutional and democratic channels for influence was not something that people did by themselves, rather the demands came from below but the introduction came from above. An implication of this has been that

people are given incentives to form popular movements for organizing through these channels instead of turning to lobbying, individual strongmen and political bosses (Baiocchi & Heller, 2009; Tharakan, 2004).

Also studies from United States and Italy indicate that significant developments in civil society seem to have followed from rather than to have given rise to significant developments through state and politics (Skockpol 1992; Fiorina and Skocpol 1999; Tarrow 1994, cited in Harriss, et al., 2004a: 15). Thus, there is a need for not only community initiatives from below but the actually implementation from above also.

8 Concluding Remarks

The background for the analysis in this thesis has been the recent democratization in Indonesia that has led to impressive and extensive freedoms, and the successful holding of elections. On the other hand, recent research on the state of democracy in Indonesia has found that there are some severe challenges for democracy in Indonesia. More specific research on the tsunami-affected and conflict-ridden Aceh province on north Sumatra, indicate that a lot of the problems with the deepening and further development of democracy, is related to a need to extend the representation beyond the formal holding of elections, and a need to promote democratic participation from below (Törnquist, et al., 2010). Another ongoing study in the South Aceh district in the Aceh province aims to map what actually exists of additional forms of representation and participation.

By taking the definition of democracy as *popular control over public affairs on the basis of political equality* as a point of departure as well as Törnquist's (2009d) theoretical framework for the conceptualization of democracy, the aim has been to perform an 'upside down' comparison of democratic representation in Aceh and historically in Scandinavia. The logic behind the comparison has been that instead of taking the relative successful democracy in Scandinavia as a point of departure for assessing democracy in Aceh, I have firstly identified some problems with democratic representation in Aceh, and then used these as a point of departure for analyzing Scandinavian experiences to see if any similar problems have been handled or solved.

The empirical background for identifying the problems in Aceh have primarily been built on some preliminary research results from the local project in South Aceh, but I have also drawn on other literature on Aceh and Indonesia in general.

The problems with democratic representation in Aceh appeared to be related to three overarching problems of an unclear relationship between the *demos* and the public affairs, an insufficiency of democratic intermediary channels for people to exercise popular control, and a lack of capacity of and trust in the government institutions. After specifying these problems in Aceh, the general situation in

Scandinavia relating to the same issues was mapped. Further, the relative successful establishment of some of these issues in Scandinavia seemed to be related to some additional factors: The social corporatist system, the universal welfare state, the extensive participation in organizations, high levels of trust in the state, transparent public administration and lastly a combination of strong local authorities and a strong state. Moreover, there are recent tendencies towards the weakening of the democratic representation in Scandinavia, and some of the challenges faced are not that different from those that Aceh are facing.

The development of these deemed to be important factors in Scandinavia was in turn investigated further by aiming at tracing the processes behind the establishment of them. Some of these processes seemed to be related to some structural preconditions in pre-democratic Scandinavia, while other issues were clearly related to actual politics and active state intervention. The next step was thus to perform a thematic comparison of Aceh and Scandinavia where the possibilities for any of the findings serving as potential sources for inspiration for the further development of democracy in Aceh.

The general conclusion is that some of the processes were especially important in Scandinavia: the active role of the state and the active role of the social democratic party. These are tendencies that are in contrast to the focus in Indonesia on decentralization and participation through civil society. Moreover these are also some of the issues that Scandinavia is facing challenges with due to globalization and recent developments.

In addition to drawing on experiences from Scandinavia, some more recent experiences from Brazil and India with participatory budgeting were discussed. The interesting part is that also in these cases there was a clear tendency of the importance of combining the initiatives from below with implementation from above by a strong state or through an alliance with political parties.

In conclusion, there seems to be some points that could serve as inspiration for further developing democracy in Aceh. Equally interesting is it that there seems to also be lessons for Scandinavia in how the Scandinavian model can be sustained in a global

context (Törnquist, 2010e: 5). This of course will need to be subject to further research.

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